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Security alert for Hussein funeral

Fear of Iraqi revenge mission against Clinton and Blair

By CHRISTOPHER WALKER
IN AMMAN

A HUGE security operation is being mounted in Jordan today to protect Western leaders attending the state funeral of King Hussein from possible attacks by Iraqi agents.

Western security experts fear that President Clinton and Tony Blair, the instigators of last December's Operation Desert Fox, could be targets for hit squads formed from the thousands of Iraqi agents known to operate inside the Hashemite kingdom.

The American and British leaders will be among about 40 heads of state and government from around the world attending the funeral, which will also see hardline Israelis like Benjamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister, and Ariel Sharon, the Foreign Minister, join mourners from such radical Arab states still technically at war with Israel such as Iraq, Libya and possibly Syria.

In recent years, agents acting for President Saddam Hussein of Iraq and his eldest son, Uday, have been responsible for a number of acts of violence in Jordan and are known to operate an intelligence network here which spies on the many refugees from the Iraqi dictatorship. In Amman, Iraq maintains a large and heavily-guarded embassy.

One Western expert said: "Even Islamic extremists in Jordan are not expected to cause trouble out of respect for the dead King, a direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad. But for the Iraqis, it is probably the only chance they will ever get to have both Clinton and Blair in their sights. Frankly, it is going to be a security nightmare."

Jordan recently reinforced



King Abdullah II being sworn in yesterday

its forces along the borders with both Iraq and Syria in an effort to deter attempts by either of the radical regimes to take advantage of the ascension to the Jordanian throne of King Abdullah II, 37. Hussein's eldest son, to launch an attack or foment unrest.

Despite the precautions, it is readily admitted by Jordanian officials that both borders are porous and have been used for smuggling weapons into the Hashemite kingdom in recent months.

Iraqi anger at the American and British leaders provoked by the bombing of Baghdad has been aggravated by further incidents, including attacks on Iraqi planes and air defences inside the no-fly zones imposed on the north and south of the country.

Buckingham Palace confirmed yesterday that the Prince of Wales would attend the funeral on behalf of the Queen, a personal admirer of Hussein, who hosted a state visit by her in 1984.

The tendency of foreign ter-

THE TIMETABLE

10.30am (0830 GMT) Mourners gather at al-Husseini Sport City and are transferred to royal compound near the centre of Amman.
11.45 Foreign dignitaries arrive at royal compound.
12.50 The royal princes carry the coffin draped in the Jordanian flag to the main entrance of King Hussein's palace.
13.45 Coffin is passed to eight soldiers who carry it to the mosque.
14.00 The hearse leaves for the Raghadan Palace.
14.30 King Abdullah pays his last respects.
14.45 Foreign dignitaries arrive.
14.50 The coffin is taken outside on a gun carriage to the royal mosque. The body is carried on the shoulders of eight officers towards the royal cemetery.

rorist groups to use Jordanian soil as a venue for launching attacks against visitors was shown then, when a bomb attack was mounted at the hotel where British journalists covering the royal visit were staying. That explosion and other threats were claimed as the work of the Abu Nidal terrorist organisation, whose severely ailing leader was recently reported to have moved his headquarters to Baghdad.

In Moscow it was announced that a still-ailing President Yeltsin would lead Russia's delegation.

The huge turnout of mourners from around the world in a country with less than five million inhabitants is evidence both of the enormous international respect and affection for the late King, who had ruled for the past 47 years, and evidence of Jordan's pivotal strategic importance.

The official Iraqi news agency Ina announced Hussein's death without comment in a bulletin from Amman. Ties between the two countries have

thawed since a deterioration at the start of 1998. An economic pact was signed earlier this month and an oil agreement was concluded in January.

The guest list for the funeral outweighs in numbers and seniority those for two previous occasions of similar significance in the Middle East, the Cairo funeral of the Egyptian President Anwar Sadat after his assassination in 1981, and the burial of the Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli Prime Minister, after his murder by a Jewish right-wing fanatic in 1995.

Mr Rabin's widow, Leah, will be prominent among a large Israeli contingent to be led by President Weizman. It will also include Shimon Peres, the Jewish former Prime Minister, and Yitzhak Shamir, another former Prime Minister but one whose ultra-nationalist views have frequently been attacked by the Jordanian Government.

The late King, who was pronounced dead from the effects of lymphatic cancer at 11.43am yesterday after two days on a life-support machine, was surrounded by controversy even in his dying hours.

Jordanian sources said that an attempt by Queen Noor, his American-born fourth wife, to have his body moved from the intensive care ward of the Hussein Medical Centre near Amman to one of his palaces, was rejected by doctors and he died at the hospital.

Outside the gates, in rain and mist, about 2,000 mourners had gathered. Some had slept rough for two nights in the hope of a miracle that never came.

King Abdullah will be the youngest ruler in the region. Under the Jordanian constitution, he will enjoy the same sweeping powers as his father



Jordan's new King Abdullah II stands at attention in front of a life-size portrait of his late father, Hussein

with the right to appoint the Prime Minister and with little effective opposition from a weak, elected 80-seat lower house of parliament.

In a surprise move, King Abdullah last night named his half brother, Prince Hamzah, as Crown Prince and heir apparent by a royal decree. The 38-year-old Crown Prince, who currently at Sandhurst, is the

eldest son of Hussein's four children from his fourth marriage to Queen Noor.

In the weeks before Hussein's death, there had been heated speculation that the Queen was pressing for Hamzah to be named as his successor. Last night's move was understood to have been the personal wish of the late King and was seen as a further attempt

to try to unify the feuding family against the difficult times ahead. In another conciliatory gesture, Jordanian sources said that the King's widow would be able to retain her title as Queen.

Opposition politicians, meeting in private in recent days, have drawn up a plan to press the new King to expand Jordan's embryonic democratic

structures and to weaken the recent iron grip of the intelligence service on the media. Heavily censored and inaccurate reporting of the King's medical condition in his final days provoked widespread public anger.

Jordan's grief, pages 11-13
Leading article, page 21
Obituary, page 23

Small firms face squeeze

Up to 800 of Britain's smaller companies will be forced to leave the stock market because they are being starved of investment. Investors tracking stock market indices is making it difficult for small companies to raise money to expand. Page 48

Pensions risk

Men who join company pension schemes are 50 per cent more likely to lose their jobs involuntarily than those who do not. Page 7

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Yard studies new charges against Lawrence murder suspects

By STEWART TENDLER
CRIME CORRESPONDENT

DETECTIVES have been ordered to find new charges against the five men suspected of the murder of Stephen Lawrence six years ago.

Three of them were acquitted at the Old Bailey two years ago after a private prosecution filed by the Lawrence family. The other two were not committed for trial after a magistrate ruled there was insufficient evidence.

Now Deputy Assistant Commissioner John Grieve, head of the Yard's new race and violence task force, who took over the Lawrence case two weeks ago has ordered his team to see if the five can be charged again.

Mr Grieve's officers are investigating whether it would be possible to bring a new charge of conspiracy to murder or affray and assault. Last month a team of police analysts met at the Yard and began studying the evidence in the case for new leads and a



Lawrence: Yard to reopen files six years after killing

new assessment. The law prohibits anyone from being tried for an offence for which they have been acquitted. Yesterday legal experts said new charges were technically feasible but may then be doomed in court.

But Mr Grieve is understood to be studying reports on a decision by American police to reopen investigations into the murder of three civil rights activists by the Ku Klux Klan

34 years ago. No one was ever convicted for the killings.

He has told his team of 15 officers at Scotland Yard that if a 34-year-old case can be reopened it is possible to reactivate the Lawrence inquiry. At the same time Mr Grieve is understood to be anxious not to raise the expectations of Dooreen and Neville Lawrence, the dead boy's parents.

It was assumed that Neil Acoot, Luke Knight and Gary Dobson could not be tried again for the race killing because they had been cleared. The case against Jamie Acoot and David Norris was never strong enough to get to court.

Any new trial would involve questions over the length of time since the murder of the 18-year-old student in a south London street in 1993 and the publicity the five have faced.

Yesterday the Crown Prosecution Service, which will have to sanction any prosecution, said no file or report has been received but the case would have to be studied carefully. If cases are discontinued

at a magistrates' court they can be resurrected but when a crown court acquits they cannot normally be renewed.

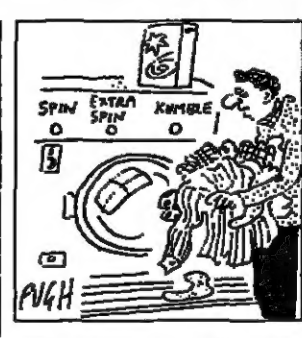
Professor Michael Zander, professor of law at the London School of Economics, said a new prosecution was not completely impossible but the chance of failure must be high. The prosecution charge would have to be different but the same evidence could be used.

Conspiracy to murder would be a different charge from murder but could still carry a life sentence on conviction. Affray and assault would carry lower penalties.

Anne Rafferty QC, a specialist in criminal cases, said a new prosecution would be difficult because it would be hard to keep the new case separate from the first. She said defence lawyers would say it was the same trial by another name.

The prosecutors might produce new evidence but it would have to be revealing and show a different case.

Monumental hitch, page 3



Ten wicket triumph in Test

Anil Kumble, the India leg spinner, became only the second man in the 122-year history of Test match cricket, after Jim Laker, of England, to take ten wickets in an innings.

Kumble, 28, finished with 10 for 74 — second only to Laker's ten for 53 against Australia at Old Trafford in 1956 in the all-time list of greatest ever analyses. His remarkable efforts enabled India to beat Pakistan, their arch-rivals, by 212 runs in the second Test between the sides at Delhi. Pages 25, 26

Classic karaoke for the bathroom divas

By DALYA ALBERGE
ARTS CORRESPONDENT

KARAOKE for classical music lovers is on its way. Latter-day Callases and wannabe Pavarottis will no longer have to belt out their arias alone in the bath. From now on they can have full orchestral accompaniment, and a backing chorus too.

Technology even allows for the support of professional soloists, who can be edited out or turned down if desired, to give a little support without drowning out the true star. Hitherto

undiscovered divas and bathroom baritones will be able to make recordings, mixing their underappreciated voices with the professionals' music.

La Donna e Mobile from Verdi's *Rigoletto* and *Mi Chiamano Mimi* from Puccini's *La Boheme* are among 140 arias from 58 French and Italian operas being issued on ten CD-Rom discs. James Bulmer of Sunfly Media describes the company's Cantolopera Collection as an upmarket interactive product, and claims it is a world away from karaoke — Japanese for "empty orchestra" — and its associations with

pop and pub culture, though Sunfly has hitherto specialised in such recordings. "With this," he said, "we have taken the concept that opera is sexy. Opera now is for everyone. It is for ordinary people who like a good tune. We all like a good tune ... No longer is opera for the highbrow intelligentsia. It has gone for mass appeal. The Three Tenors have made sure of that."

Lucy Hall of Classic FM said: "It's terrific fun. You can turn down that soprano or baritone and belt out yours." The radio station's May issue of its magazine, out in April, will fea-

ture a sampler disk of four arias. The recordings are designed to be used on a PC or Apple computer, the screens carrying the score and words, in English or the original language.

The recordings — made in Italy by the Compagnia d'Opera Italiana under the baton of Antonello Gotta and with young singers including Matteo Peirone — will be available in the high street from April. Each £37 disk will feature up to 15 arias, as well as analyses of the plot, biographical details, language pronunciations and a dictionary of operatic terms.

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05/17/11/49

Brown to squeeze more tax from company car owners

COMPANY car drivers who opt for large cars with poor fuel efficiency are to be penalised under new tax rules. The Chancellor is proposing to charge employees according to how much damage their cars do to the environment rather than the price of the vehicles.

Gordon Brown is keen to deter companies from providing cars for employees, because they are usually large-engined cars and also because company car drivers cover a much higher mileage than private motorists. The majority of vehicles with engine sizes above two litres are company owned. Company cars are driven an average of 23,000 miles a year, compared

with 9,000 miles for a private car. However, Mr Brown is conscious that many of the larger cars that are used by employers tend to be made by British manufacturers. He has been advised of the danger to manufacturers such as the troubled Rover if he is too tough on company car drivers.

Treasury officials argue that a fairer system than taxing company cars by value would be to tax according to emission levels, which must be disclosed by manufacturers from next year.

The Chancellor is keen to use the company car tax system to force motor manufacturers to fall into line with new European Union rules in-

Chancellor seeks to set green example, writes Arthur Leathley

tended to reduce pollution, due to come into force next year. More than half the 2.2 million new cars sold in Britain each year are company owned.

The moves, expected to be included in next month's Budget, will coincide with other plans, already announced, to increase the cost of the annual car tax disc for large-engined and energy inefficient cars. Mr Brown will confirm in the Budget that owners of small-engined cars will have a £50 reduction on the £150 car tax, while owners of less efficient cars are expected to

pay more than at present. Treasury officials believe that, by targeting company-owned new cars, manufacturers will quickly be persuaded to produce more fuel-efficient vehicles. A Treasury document published last November said: "There is some evidence that car buyers do not take full account of possible savings in fuel cost when deciding which models to buy."

The Chancellor will use the Budget to signal moves to focus motorists' and manufacturers' attention on emission levels. His plans for company car tax will create a series

of tax bands dependent on carbon dioxide emissions. New cars that exceed agreed carbon dioxide levels will attract higher taxes for the employee.

At present, the complex taxation system is based on the value of the car, but some of the most expensive cars have highly advanced systems that make them more fuel efficient and less polluting.

Existing cars, where carbon dioxide emission levels are unknown, are to be taxed according to engine size rather than emission levels, although motor manufacturers say

this is an inaccurate way of measuring pollution levels.

Treasury officials are considering whether to introduce a "escalator" into the company car tax system, under which the owners of most heavily polluting cars would pay a steadily increasing tax over a number of years.

Although ministers acknowledge that older cars are far greater polluters than new vehicles, they believe that targeting new cars will quickly have a substantial "trickle-down" effect on the 22-million national car fleet. Britain is committed to a 20 per cent reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 2010.

The Chancellor, forced to abandon

plans to tax private mileage driven by company car owners, is adamant that punitive taxes should be imposed on the least efficient cars.

The AA said last night: "If the Chancellor uses engine size as a measure, it will be totally bogus and clearly aimed to raise more tax rather than help the environment."

The Budget will set out plans to reduce car tax to £100 for existing small cars, probably those with an engine capacity less than 1250cc.

However, existing cars with engines larger than two litres, and possibly more than 1600cc, will pay an annual amount higher than the current £150.

Public scorns advice over food safety

MOST people do not trust ministers to make the right decisions for them on such issues as beef on the bone or genetically altered food, a government-funded poll will show today.

A MORI survey for the Cabinet Office shows that most people trust independent scientists and pressure groups more than politicians for advice on matters of scientific judgment.

The findings reflect public unease with the handling of the BSE crisis by the previous Conservative Government. But the results will make uncomfortable reading for ministers who are trying to offer sensible solutions on a range of policy issues.

The poll was commissioned by the Better Regulation Task Force, headed by Lord Haskins as part of a debate inside the Government on risk management. A seminar on the subject will be held at the Cabinet Office today when the

A poll tells ministers that their scientific judgments carry little weight, reports Valerie Elliott

full results from the public attitude survey will be disclosed.

Tony Blair and his ministers will be left in no doubt that on certain issues they are not trusted to take decisions on behalf of the public. However, on such matters as terrorism, crime and drugs the public relies on government action and advice. Even on these, according to the poll, people believe that the state could do more.

The poll was part of a new strategy to find out if the public wishes to be "nannied" by the state or left to make its own decisions, particularly on matters of personal choice.

The debate is timely, given the controversy over the continued ban on beef on the bone and worries over the production of genetically modified

food. Risk is attached to other policy issues facing the Government, from calls to set up a nanny register to concerns over some children's vaccines such as MMR (for mumps, measles and rubella).

Lord Haskins, a former and chairman of Northern Foods, takes a robust line on most of these issues, which he believes are a matter of personal freedom.

The issue of risk versus proportionality and how that should dictate policy will be the theme of today's seminar. Mr Blair will not be present but one of his close aides will attend and two members of the No.10 policy unit, Geoff Mulgan and James Purnell, are expected to take part.

While 86 per cent of those

polled said that they had confidence in the food they ate, specific questions revealed anxieties.

Some 69 per cent were afraid of the long-term effects of chemicals in food, 57 per cent were concerned about the production of genetically modified food, 54 per cent were concerned about BSE and 51 per cent were worried about food poisoning generally.

There was some surprise in the Government that as Britain approaches the millennium, 37 per cent still feared chronic disease from poor diet. The public was particularly concerned about the effects of passive smoking on children and 80 per cent backed a complete ban on smoking in children's areas in restaurants and pubs.

The people who knew least about health and food safety were the ethnic minorities, those in the lower social classes, D and E, and people aged over 75.

Health fears may be overdone

By MICHAEL HORNSBY
AGRICULTURE
CORRESPONDENT

PEOPLE are right to be worried about the safety of food, though their fears are almost certainly exaggerated when compared with the reality of the risks they face.

Public perceptions of danger appear to be related closely to the high profile given by the media to certain subjects, such as BSE, salmonella and pesticides. Food in general would also seem to be an emotive subject because people feel they lack control over, and reliable information about, the risks they are being asked to accept.

On the basis of 1997 figures, about 1 in 532 people in England and Wales, and 1 in 508 in Scotland, were sufficiently badly poisoned by food for their cases to be officially recorded. The chance of eating something that will badly disagree with you this year is thus fairly high, between 7 and 8 on a scale of risk running from 0 to 10 used by the Department of Health.

On the other hand, the risk

PESTICIDES

Perceptions: MORI suggests that 69 per cent of people are worried about the long-term effects of pesticides in food. Reality: no hard evidence has ever been produced linking pesticide residues to increased illness in people.

G.M. FOOD

Perceptions: 57 per cent worried about production of genetically modified foods. Reality: GM foods on the market are probably safer than many conventional foods. More reason to be concerned about the impact on wildlife and countryside — data still sketchy.

BSE

Perceptions: 54 per cent say they are worried about BSE. Reality: eating beef now probably one of the safest things to do. Genuine reason to be concerned about level of infection to which everyone has been exposed; effects could take years, if not decades, to appear.

E. COLI O157

Perceptions: 94 per cent aware and 25 per cent feel at risk (38 per cent in Scotland). Reality: relatively new and rare. In 1997, recorded as affecting 1 in 12,170 in Scotland and 1 in 46,000 in England and Wales. More likely to cause death than more common bugs.

SALMONELLA

Perceptions: 99 per cent know of it and 51 per cent feel at risk. Reality: second most common cause of food poisoning. About 1 in 1,600 people fell sufficiently ill in 1997 for cases to be recorded. Diarrhoea and vomiting most usual symptoms. Rarely life-threatening.

CAMPYLOBACTER

Perceptions: only 13 per cent of people know of it. Has never attracted same degree of media attention as salmonella. Reality: commonest cause of food poisoning, accounting for about 54 per cent of all notified cases. Symptoms similar to salmonella. Fatalities rare.

of dying from eating contaminated food is low, between 1 in 283,000 and 1 in 566,000, given that food-related deaths run at about 100 to 200 a year. This would fall between risk levels

4 and 5, officially classed as "minimal" and about the same as the likelihood of dying in a rail accident. The risk of dying in a road accident is 1 in 8,000 and in an air crash 1 in 20,000.

These risks pale into insignificance beside smoking ten cigarettes a day, a danger willingly embraced by millions, which has a 1 in 200 chance of causing death.



Jessica Brooks who, despite her experience, has not lost her love of dogs

Young heroes honoured

By ALEX O'CONNELL

JESSICA BROOKS was staying the night with friends when she looked over at their family dog, thought it looked sad and bent to give it a kiss. Suddenly, and completely out of character, the 8-year-old girl attacked and severely damaged her face. Extensive emergency treatment saved Jessica's mouth and many operations have rebuilt part of her face.

Her mother, Tracy, from Ayr, Lincolnshire, said that the bite was so serious that the surgeon stopped counting after the first 100 stitches. Yesterday Jessica was one of 150

children under 17 honoured at the Child of Achievement Awards at the Hilton Hotel in London.

Despite the attack, Jessica, 8, is still fond of animals and was upset when the dog involved had to be put down. She has befriended another dog who had been badly scarred in an acid attack.

Another winner, Matthew Robbins, 14, from Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire, found that he had leukaemia when he was eight. He endured a bone marrow transplant and has spent much of the past six years in Bristol Children's

Hospital. "I got leukaemia twice and I coped with school while I had it," he said.

Other winners include Abdul al-Raza, 7, from Berkshire, who suffered severe head and spinal injuries, and Rebecca Gough, 5, from Hertfordshire, who was a great comfort to her grandmother when her grandfather died.

The prize-winners were nominated by friends, family, teachers or doctors who felt that the children should be honoured for their ability to overcome illness, disability or for feats of kindness and generosity.

Leading article, page 21

Mowlam concedes peace process is in difficulty

By AUDREY MAGEL, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

MO MOWLAM conceded yesterday that the Ulster peace process was in difficulty and might miss the March 10 deadline for transferring powers from Westminster to Belfast.

The admission from the Northern Ireland Secretary underlines the crisis in the peace process, deadlocked over IRA arms decommissioning. The London and Dublin governments have failed to find a way around the impasse.

Dr Mowlam told the BBC: "We missed the Good Friday

Agreement by a couple of days. We may well miss this. I'm aiming for it. The people are aiming for it, but nothing is written in stone."

Tony Blair is on stand-by to fly to Northern Ireland to help to break the deadlock and persuade Ulster's political parties to find a way forward. All sides are due back at Stormont next Monday for a critical debate to agree the establishment of ten ministerial departments and a number of cross border implementation bodies. But the stand-off over decommissioning is almost

certain to hold up the timetable for change.

The IRA refuses to hand over any weapons, despite Unionist insistence that Sinn Fein can not take its seats on the executive until the terrorists hand over at least some weapons and explosives. Sinn Fein insists that decommissioning is not a pre-condition in the Good Friday Agreement to taking seats on the executive.

Ms Mowlam said the peace process was not unravelling but going through a difficult phase.

Students 'ought to pay full fees'

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

UNIVERSITIES are in decline and short of money, ideas and confidence, a former vice-chancellor says today in a pamphlet arguing for annual fees of up to £20,000.

Sir Graham Hills, a former vice-chancellor of Strathclyde University and government adviser, blames dependence on central government for the universities' plight.

Only by funding universities entirely through student vouchers based on the full cost of courses will academic independence and initiative return, he says. Degree courses

would cost from £5,000 a year for philosophy to £20,000 for medicine, with scholarships and bursaries keeping down the cost for poor students.

In *From Beggars to Choosers*, published by the conservative think-tank Politeia, he says the expansion of higher education since the 1960s led inevitably to lower standards.

"Universities are no longer concerned with liberty, freedom of speech, the challenge to political or religious authority or reforms of education. They are principally concerned with balancing the books."

Feel free to attack the Lib-Dems, says Blair

By MARK HENDERSON AND ROLAND WATSON

LABOUR activists received the go-ahead to fight the Liberal Democrats in this year's round of elections despite the two parties' policy of co-operation at Westminster.

Tony Blair was warmly applauded when he told delegates at Labour's local government conference that a vote for the Liberal Democrats was a "leap in the dark".

His comments served to ease the fears among Labour's rank and file that links with the Liberal Democrat leadership were clipping the wings of local councillors, for whom

the third party is in many cases their most direct opponent.

Mr Blair said that although he would work with them where the two parties agreed, such as in modernising the constitution, Labour would point out when they were wrong.

"Locally, they will promise everything to anyone, but can't deliver it," he said.

However, the chief message in yesterday's conference speech was a pep talk from Mr Blair to the 3,000 delegates, urging them to shrug off apathy and cynicism about the

new Labour project and help it through its "toughest period" yet.

Although Labour were riding high in the polls, Mr Blair conceded that many of the Government's actions had yet to filter through to ground level. "We have got to get our noses to the grindstone and get delivery — it is as simple as that," he said.

He also warned of the dangers of losing touch or of internal splits. "What has prevented us from winning two successive terms of office has been the Labour Party itself."

749 STATIONS REGENERATED

WHAT A RELIEF

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RAILTRACK
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Lawrence retrial 'counter to justice'



Anthony Scrivener, QC, argues that once a suspect has been acquitted a second attempt to get a conviction for the same offence would be wrong

THE longer the Lawrence inquiry went on, the more apparent it became that the police investigation into the murder had been woefully inadequate. The family tried to bring a private prosecution, but were not equipped to carry out a criminal investigation. They were left with the evidence provided by the police, such as it was, and on that evidence the prosecution failed. The accused stand acquitted of murder.

The accused were brought before the inquiry, but as a result of a court decision they could not be asked any incriminating questions. Their appearance at the inquiry did not assist in discovering the truth and the men's loutish behaviour as they left the inquiry was enough to anger not only the Lawrence family and ordinary decent people, but also honest and conscientious policemen who realised that the good name of the police force had been tarnished by the pathetic police investigation.

It is not surprising with this background that the possibility of having another go at the prime suspects should be considered. However any such attempt would face monumental difficulties and would run counter to a basic principle of the criminal law which protects those who have been acquitted.

Everyone knows that a person who has been acquitted cannot be tried again for the same offence even if new evidence becomes available after trial which points incontrovertibly to that person's guilt. This is called the rule against double jeopardy. But the rule is in fact wider than this.

Lord MacDermott, in an appeal from Malaysia, pointed out that the verdict of not guilty is binding and conclusive in all subsequent proceedings between the parties. Once someone has been acquitted, the prosecution cannot challenge that acquittal in a second trial by seeking to prove him guilty of the crime of which he was acquitted.

fact that the police claimed he had made an admission of the offence. His conviction for carrying a firearm at a subsequent trial was set aside on appeal because the court had allowed the admission in evidence at that second trial.

In another case, a defendant who had been acquitted of murder later confessed to a newspaper that he had in fact committed the crime. A Scots court held that he could be tried for perjury.

However, there are even greater problems facing a fresh prosecution. The courts have the obligation to ensure that criminal proceedings do not amount to an abuse of the processes of the court and that criminal proceedings are not oppressive or unfair.

In the Maxwell case a court exercised this jurisdiction. Kevin Maxwell had stood trial in a blaze of publicity on charges which the prosecution considered were the strongest they had. He was acquitted.

The serious fraud office then wanted to try him again on less serious offences which had been severed from the first trial. The trial judge would not allow this. The first trial had gone on for months. Kevin Maxwell had been in the witness box for many weeks. The publicity had been intense. The judge held it would be oppressive for Kevin Maxwell to endure a second trial, it would be unfair in the light of the publicity which potential jurors would have seen.

In any fresh proceedings brought in connection with the Lawrence case, the defence would rely on these principles.

The accused have been acquitted of murder. There has been intense and hostile publicity to which potential jurors will have been subjected. The courts will not wish to dilute these important legal principles which are there for the protection of citizens just because the accused in this case are so unsympathetic.

Anthony Scrivener is a former chairman of the Bar Council, and a leading Queen's Counsel.



Luke Knight: sent for trial and acquitted



Jamie Acourt: insufficient evidence



David Norris: insufficient evidence

Suspects never faced full trial

By STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

THE five young men once accused of murdering Stephen Lawrence have between them run the gamut of the legal system, from the magistrates' court to the Old Bailey, but none has stood full trial.

David Norris, Luke Knight, Gary Dobson, Jamie Acourt and his brother Neil were originally charged in 1993, but the case was dropped before committal proceedings began after the Crown Prosecution Service said there was insufficient evidence.

A year later the CPS again declined to go ahead with the case. However, in April 1995, lawyers for the Lawrence family began a private prosecution. In August of that year Neil Acourt, Luke Knight and Gary Dobson were sent for trial. The charges against Jamie Acourt and David Norris were thrown out after a magistrate ruled that there

was insufficient evidence. The three remaining defendants appeared at the Old Bailey nine months later, but the case never reached the jury stage. The judge decided, after hearing defence submissions, that a key witness, Duwayne Brooks, was unreliable. He acquitted the three.

In February 1997 the five were called to the inquest on Stephen Lawrence, but declined to answer questions. At the inquiry into the police's handling of the case, before Sir William Macpherson of Cluny, they protested their innocence and were nearly mobbed as they left the hearing.

All five are reported still to live in the South London area where Stephen Lawrence was killed. None of them is reported to be working, although Jamie and Neil Acourt appear as DJs at a club.



Neil Acourt: sent for trial and acquitted

Hunt suspends pair for graveyard ride

By ALEX O'CONNELL

TWO followers of the Heythrop Hunt were suspended last night for riding through the graveyard where Sir Winston Churchill is buried.

The riders, a man and a woman, were banned at a meeting of the hunt after people living in Bladon, Oxfordshire, near the Blenheim estate, complained that they galloped through the churchyard last Friday, damaging the cemetery. A newly laid path near the grave was cut with hoofmarks.

John Sumner, joint master of the hunt, said: "We are taking it very seriously. We have never had this sort of thing happen before. If we had seen it happen at the time, they would have been sacked

straight away." Mikey Eliot, another joint master, who was riding on Friday, said: "I was furious."

"I denied it when someone asked me about it immediately afterwards, because I couldn't believe that anybody would be quite so stupid."

Speaking at the meeting in the home of another hunt master, in Upper Slaughter, last night, he added: "Two members of the hunt regrettably rode into the churchyard. Their membership has now been suspended and we regret any distress that may have been caused."

The six members of the parish council are also expected to debate the incident and are understood to be writing a letter

of complaint to the masters of the Chipping Norton-based hunt. Mabel Dyer, chairman of Bladon Parish Council, said villagers were "very, very upset" by the way the hunt had ridden through the churchyard.

Mrs Dyer said: "Knowing that Sir Winston Churchill is buried there should have been reason enough for them to give the place a very wide berth. They have caused damage in the churchyard and galloped through the place where Sir Winston's grave is."

"The newly laid path has been pitted with hoof marks. It is appalling."

Sue Hawker, headmistress of Bladon Primary School, said that her pupils had been in the playground on morning break just minutes before the hounds rushed into the schoolyard.

Other villagers described how the hounds had terrified a young girl who was walking a dog in a field near the church.

Mr Sumner said: "We were hunting on the Blenheim estate, which runs at the back of Bladon Church. When the ground is as wet as it is, and the hounds are following a fox quite tightly, it is often difficult to stop them running off at a tangent."

"However, we realise that this was an unacceptable thing to happen and we wish to apologise to the villagers."

Penelope Keith must quit fund, says actor

By CLAUDIA JOSEPH

NICKOLAS GRACE, the actor who played the stammering bon vivant Anthony Blanche in *Brideshead Revisited*, has called for the resignation of Penelope Keith, the president of the Actors' Benevolent Fund, after the charity spent more than £32,000 on lawyers and auditors and dismissed its general secretary.

Grace, who resigned from the charity's executive council last year after falling out with Keith, fears that the reputation of the fund is in jeopardy as it becomes engulfed in a costly legal action for wrongful dismissal.

In another setback, the Queen, who has been a patron of the fund since 1952, has announced that she will be stepping down this year.

Rosemary Stevens, the former general secretary, will today take her case for wrongful dismissal to an industrial tribunal. Her assistant settled out of court last August.

Speaking for the first time since his resignation, Grace, 51, said: "This is not a clash of personalities; it is a fight to save the Actors' Benevolent Fund. It has done fantastic work helping people, but its name is being tarnished. I don't like to think members' money is being wasted."

Keith was unavailable for comment yesterday.



Bladon Church, where Sir Winston Churchill is buried

Police corruption inquiry extended

By STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

SCOTLAND YARD'S anti-corruption detectives are investigating more than 350 potential miscarriages of justice linked to allegedly crooked officers.

The cases stretch back at least ten years and some involve substantial convictions for crimes including armed robberies and drugs. Special teams of detectives and lawyers from the Crown Prosecution Service have uncovered the cases during investigations into corruption.

Last summer Scotland Yard officers were looking at about 200 cases of possi-

ble miscarriages of justice. Now Yard sources say this has risen by more than half in the past six months.

Lawyers for men now serving long prison sentences have also asked Scotland Yard to check whether convictions could be affected, and appeals may be made.

Hundreds of Yard officers have already been served with official warnings that they face questioning by detectives from the Complaints Investigation Bureau about what, if anything, they knew about malpractice. They include detectives from a team who are being questioned about allegations that some investigators may have used imitation guns and masks

to frame suspects. The investigations cover all staff over the past ten years. The officers' ranks range from constable to superintendent. One of them is Detective Superintendent Albery Patrick, moved two weeks ago from heading the latest Stephen Lawrence investigation.

Yard sources said the officers are not being accused about their involvement in the alleged use of "framing" equipment but will be asked whether they knew about it. If they did know about the equipment, they will be asked whether they turned a blind eye. They would face questions about why they did not alert senior officers if they knew it was being used.

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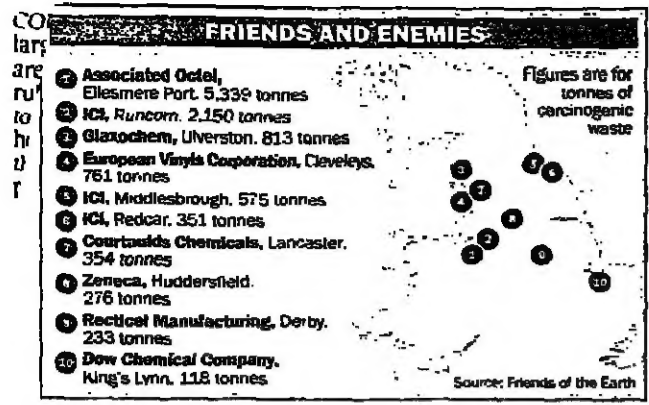
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Website smokes out the polluters



Nigel Hawkes on pressure group's attempt to rouse public opposition

A LEAGUE table of companies that produce the greatest air pollution has been produced by Friends of the Earth to encourage public opposition to polluters.

The table of 97 large factories draws on data submitted to the Environment Agency and already on the public record, though not easily accessible until now.

Friends of the Earth has put the information into a website, with software that allows householders to check the safety of industrial plants in their area simply by inputting a postcode. The pressure group hopes that the website, Factory Watch, will stimulate local opposition and help to tighten environmental standards.

It was, however, accused of exaggeration by two companies that appear in the league. ICI said that Friends of the Earth's approach was "alarmist, predictable and unnecessary". Associated Ocel, whose Ellesmere Port plants head the table, said that it was misleading to categorise their emis-



Emissions from plants such as ICI in Middlesbrough fall well below legal levels: the company said that Friends of the Earth was being alarmist

ions as cancer-causing. The website states that, in 1990, the latest year for which data is available, large factories that made returns to the Environment Agency emitted more than 13,000 tonnes of "recognised carcinogens" into the air.

The total was more than double that, according to Michael Warhurst of the pressure group. He said that smaller factories, which come under the jurisdiction of their local authorities and for which no comparable data is available, probably emitted more.

Merseyside and northwest England are the worst-affected areas, the website says, with more than 10,000 tonnes of the total for large plants. Half of that figure is said to come from Associated Ocel plants. Northeast England is the second-worst area, followed by the East and West Midlands.

The figures are not contested by the companies, but the effects of the emissions are. Friends of the Earth chose to define carcinogens by criteria adopted by the State of California in 1986, based on animal experiments that used much higher doses of the chemicals than would be encountered by human beings in ordinary life.

The carcinogens included chloroethane, lead and vinyl bromide. In 1996 Associated Ocel in Ellesmere Port released 5,128 tonnes of chloroethane, 66 tonnes of lead and eight tonnes of vinyl bromide. The company said that, under World Health Organisation guidelines, there was "no adequate evidence" of a carcinogenic effect in humans of lead and chloroethane, and only limited evidence for vinyl bromide. "Friends of the Earth should have made it clear that the concentrations of the substances emitted are so low as to present no health hazard to the workforce or the local population, based on standards set by the Health and Safety Commission," the company said. Paula Shields, a spokeswoman for ICI, said: "Factory Watch is a regurgitation of out-of-date information. ICI openly and voluntarily provides information about all its emissions to anybody who is interested. Anybody who wants site-specific information can make direct contact with their local ICI works."

The amonius released by the plants in the league table mostly fall well below the levels agreed with environmental agencies, so the companies have committed no offence. Friends of the Earth acknowledged that it was "virtually impossible" to prove that a given chemical was responsible for a particular health problem, but said that it was "plain common sense" to reduce pollution.

Associated Ocel said that, in the past two years, emissions in Ellesmere Port had fallen more than 1,000 tonnes a year, and that in 1999 they would be less than half the 1996 levels.

The pressure group called on the Government to set a target of reducing the emissions by 80 per cent by 2005, and to introduce comprehensive pollution inventories for all sources of environmental contamination, including small factories and transport.

"The worst factories are being allowed to release a quite appalling amount of health-threatening pollution" Mike Childs, of the group, said. ICI Factory Watch is at <http://www.foe.co.uk>

Leading tour firms give most cause for complaint

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY

BRITAIN'S best-known holiday firms are the most likely to attract complaints from tourists, a new survey shows.

The poll by Britain's biggest independent travel agency points to wide variations in the way that companies deal with complaints. Some are criticised for failing to disclose records on the level of dissatisfaction among customers.

The survey by Co-op Travelcare, which has 260 agencies, shows that Cosmos receives the highest level of complaints, with 3.48 per cent of holidaymakers registering formal criticism, mainly over the standard of accommodation or the holiday representative. However, Cosmos says that its own figures show complaints running at 5 per cent.

The best performing company, according to the survey of more than 600,000 holidaymakers, is Bridge, which specialises in European short breaks. The company attracted no complaints from customers booking through Co-op.

Most operators estimate that between 1 and 2 per cent of holidaymakers complain. The companies that would not give information about complaints were British Airways Holidays, Kuoni, Panorama, Shearings and Hosesons.

Behind Cosmos on the complaints list were First Choice, with 2.27 per cent, Sunworld (2.1), Sunset Holidays and Club 18-30 (1.8) and Airtours (1.45). Companies with the fewest complaints were British Holidays (0.08 per cent), Hosesons (0.19), Shearings (0.22) and Haven Holidays (0.3).

Yvonne Rankin, general manager of Co-op Travelcare, said: "All tour operators who were prepared to supply their own complaints figures deserve credit for their openness. To us, it shows a commitment to customer service."

The four biggest operators own or work in partnership with some 70 per cent of travel agents: Airtours owns Going Places, Thomson owns Lunn Poly, Thomas Cook has its own chain and runs agencies under World Choice, and First Choice runs its own agencies.

Women-
training
army tar

Bomb suspects challenge key anti-terrorism law

A KEY legal weapon in the fight against terrorism would be lost if a test case next month by four alleged bombers is successful.

Lawyers for the Middle Eastern men claim that the Prevention of Terrorism Act is in breach of the new Human Rights Act. They say that it forces the burden of proof onto the defendants, who can be found guilty unless they can prove an innocent reason for having materials that can be turned into bombs.

Lord Bingham of Cornhill, the Lord Chief Justice, is taking the test case to the House of Lords.

Frances Gibb reports on a judicial review into where the burden of proof should rest

challenge to the Act very seriously, deciding to hear the case himself at the High Court next month.

The test action is thought to be the first in which defendants in a criminal trial are invoking the safeguards contained in the Human Rights Act 1998.

The Act is not yet in force but the men are arguing that, were their case to come to trial, then the prosecution could successfully be contested under that Act, which is likely to be in force by next year.

The men have won High Court leave to bring judicial review proceedings against the Crown Prosecution Service in a hearing next month. Because of the importance of the case, the Lord Chief Justice will sit with two other judges.

The case will be the first test as to whether the European Convention on Human Rights can be invoked in the courts before the Human Rights Act comes into force.

The men, who cannot be identified because of reporting restrictions, are alleging that the charges against them under section 16(a) of the Prevention of Terrorism Act 1989 and introduced by the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 are in breach of their right to a fair trial.

It is alleged that they were in possession of chemicals and other material with the intention of making bombs for terrorist activities. They are saying that under the provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, they are required to show that the possession of this property does not give rise to a reasonable belief that they were planning to use the materials for terrorist activities — in other words, the burden of proof is on the defence when it should be on the prosecution. The men are awaiting trial. The outcome of the judicial review hearing is being keenly watched by human rights lawyers and government law officers as the first high-profile test of how human rights provisions will affect criminal trials.

Granting the men leave to bring the challenge earlier this month, Mr Justice Turner imposed reporting restrictions under the Contempt of Court Act to prevent reporting of any details identifying the men or the circumstances of the charges.

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Women-only training hits army target

A CONTROVERSIAL decision to introduce the first all-female platoons at the Army's biggest training centre has resulted in a dramatic improvement in pass rates and a significant reduction in injuries.

Although single-sex training units were considered by some to be politically incorrect, the scheme devised by Lieutenant-Colonel Simon Vandeleur, commanding officer of the Army Training Regiment at Pirbright, Surrey, has been endorsed by the recruits. The 24 women nearing the end of their course in the Morley Troop, one of the latest single-sex units at Pirbright, said that, despite "inevitable bitching among the girls", they liked training separately. "The men never treat us as equals anyway at our age," Lorraine Hindson, 18, from Newcastle upon Tyne, said during a break in firing her SA80 rifle at one of the Pirbright ranges. With women

Single-sex platoons cut injuries and increase pass rates, writes

Michael Evans

now able to compete for 70 per cent of jobs in the Army — only the infantry and armoured corps are still male-only — about 800 women are expected to pass through the Pirbright course in the 12 months from April 1 last year when the all-female scheme began. This compares with 534 in the previous 12 months when there were mixed platoons.

Colonel Vandeleur said that too many young women trying to compete with men dropped out, mostly because of injuries

to the lower limbs. The women, at an average height of 5ft 6in, had to strain to keep up with the men, at 5ft 9in.

He said that all-female training units reduced injuries among the young women, aged from 16 to 25, by 50 per cent and pass rates had increased to 70 per cent. "So, whether they like it or not, it works," he said.

The young women are barred from fraternising with their male counterparts and are kept to a strictly one-gender regime. Even their instructors are female, if there are enough to go around.

Colonel Vandeleur said that the recruits reached the same physical fitness as men, but in a different way.

Pirbright, which has the largest intake of women, is the only training centre with all-female units. It handles recruits for the Royal Logistic Corps, the Royal Artillery, now open to women, the Royal



Fighting chance: from left, Rachel Batkin, 16, Lorraine Hindson, 18, Alexandra Cottier, 25 and Sian Cornish, 17

Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, and the Household Division, which is still male-only.

Rachel Batkin, the "baby" of Morley troop at 16 years 10 months, said that being in an all-female unit had helped her to get over her early homesickness. Alexandra Cottier, from

West Crawley, Sussex, the oldest at 25 and an England footballer, said: "There are a lot of youngsters here and they don't know how to relate to an instructor who is a man. Women are more understanding."

Sian Cornish, 17 and 5ft 2in, from Bognor Regis, West Sussex, who wants to be a signal-

ler driver with the Royal Artillery, said: "Sometimes it gets a bit difficult because of the bitching, but basically we all love each other to bits."

Corporal Dawn Rees, 25, in charge of Morley Troop, said: "The trouble with mixed platoons is that the girls get involved in relations with men."

The all-female units make training less stressful. For example, all recruits, male and female, have to complete an endurance run within 40 minutes. The men might push themselves to do it in 35 minutes or less, whereas the women, without pressure from the men, take the full 40 minutes.

Branded kit makes the army a sales force

By HELEN WILLIAM

THE Army has put a range of branded clothes, accessories and leisure wear into the front line of its recruiting campaign.

In its first venture into the commercial market, it will sell fleeces, T-shirts, baseball caps, combat-style trousers and mountain bikes, complete with the Army's recruiting slogan — "Be The Best" — from April. The range also includes watches, walking boots, ski hats and stationery. There are fountain pens with the slogan "Loaded with 9mm cartridges" and propelling pencils reading "Loaded with lead".

Colonel Rory Clayton, the head of recruitment marketing, hopes it will attract more of the 17 to 26-year-olds who form the basis of the Army's new recruits. He said: "This is about recruiting and image building. After a long period when we have been forced by terrorism to withdraw from society, we want to make ourselves part of society again."

The range was developed in connection with Saatchi and Saatchi with the aim of making the Army more visible. (PA News)

Nine in running to head the Met

By STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

NINE of the most senior policemen in the country are being named in police circles as possible successors to Sir Paul Condon as head of Scotland Yard.

The post of Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police carries a salary of up to £130,000 a year, a guaranteed knighthood and the chance to run one of the world's biggest forces, with 44,000 staff. It also brings the stewardship of a troubled force.

Sir Paul has already abandoned his ambition to stay beyond next January, when his seven-year contract ends. Now there is speculation he will go early if the report of the Stephen Lawrence inquiry is highly critical of his own role and the extent of racism in the Metropolitan Police.

The post, which will include a contract for up to five years, will not be advertised. A shortlist of officers will be drawn up within the Home Office and the candidates will be asked to come in for interview. The decision will be made by Jack Straw, the Home Secretary.



Boris: looking for a mate

Eagle-eyed Boris takes to the air

A RARE Siberian eagle owl whose eyesight was saved by laser surgery, has flown for the first time in two years thanks to the operation.

The 20-year-old bird, known as Boris and one of two of the species in captivity in Britain, flew the 5ft to and from his perches in a tiny aviary at an owl sanctuary on Goss Moor, Cornwall.

Carolyn Screech, who runs the sanctuary with her husband, Tom, said: "He is improving and, when he is more lively, we will transfer him to a larger aviary." Boris will be on show to the public this weekend for the first time since the surgery last month.

The sanctuary is in contact with Moscow Zoo about finding a mate for Boris now that his sight has been restored.

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Whitehall urged to show true colours

Richard Ford on drive to combat racism in the corridors of power

THE Government is urged today to appoint blacks and Asians to senior positions in Whitehall and the Diplomatic Service as part of a drive to combat discrimination and racism.

The proposal from a Blairite think-tank would lead to the first member of an ethnic minority being appointed an ambassador. Ministers are also told to adopt the American practice of linking members of ethnic groups to their origins, using such terms as African Briton, Asian Briton or Chinese Briton.

The report also calls for ministers to appoint blacks and Asians to be their special advisers in Whitehall departments and to senior positions in the information service.

Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, author of the report entitled *True Colours*, said: "The challenge is for white people to transform their notion of nationhood so that ethnic-minority Britons have a place within it. It is also to get black and Asian Britons to see themselves as an integral part of the nation and not at the fringes. It is noticeable that advisers to ministers, and senior Whitehall officials, are almost exclusively white."

There are no members of ethnic minorities among the special advisers working with Cabinet ministers. The Prime Minister has personally appointed two people from ethnic minorities to the Downing Street policy staff.

In 1997 10 per cent of applicants for a post of assistant information officer in Whitehall were from ethnic minorities. A similar figure applied for jobs as information officers last year. The Cabinet Office

did not have a figure for successful applicants.

Ms Alibhai-Brown's report, published by the Institute for Public Policy Research, demands greater recognition of the sacrifices made by black and Asian soldiers at commemoration services for the Second World War and for ministers to attend the Notting Hill carnival.

It urges the Government to create a "rebuttal team" to counter misinformation in the media about the three million people from ethnic minorities in Britain.

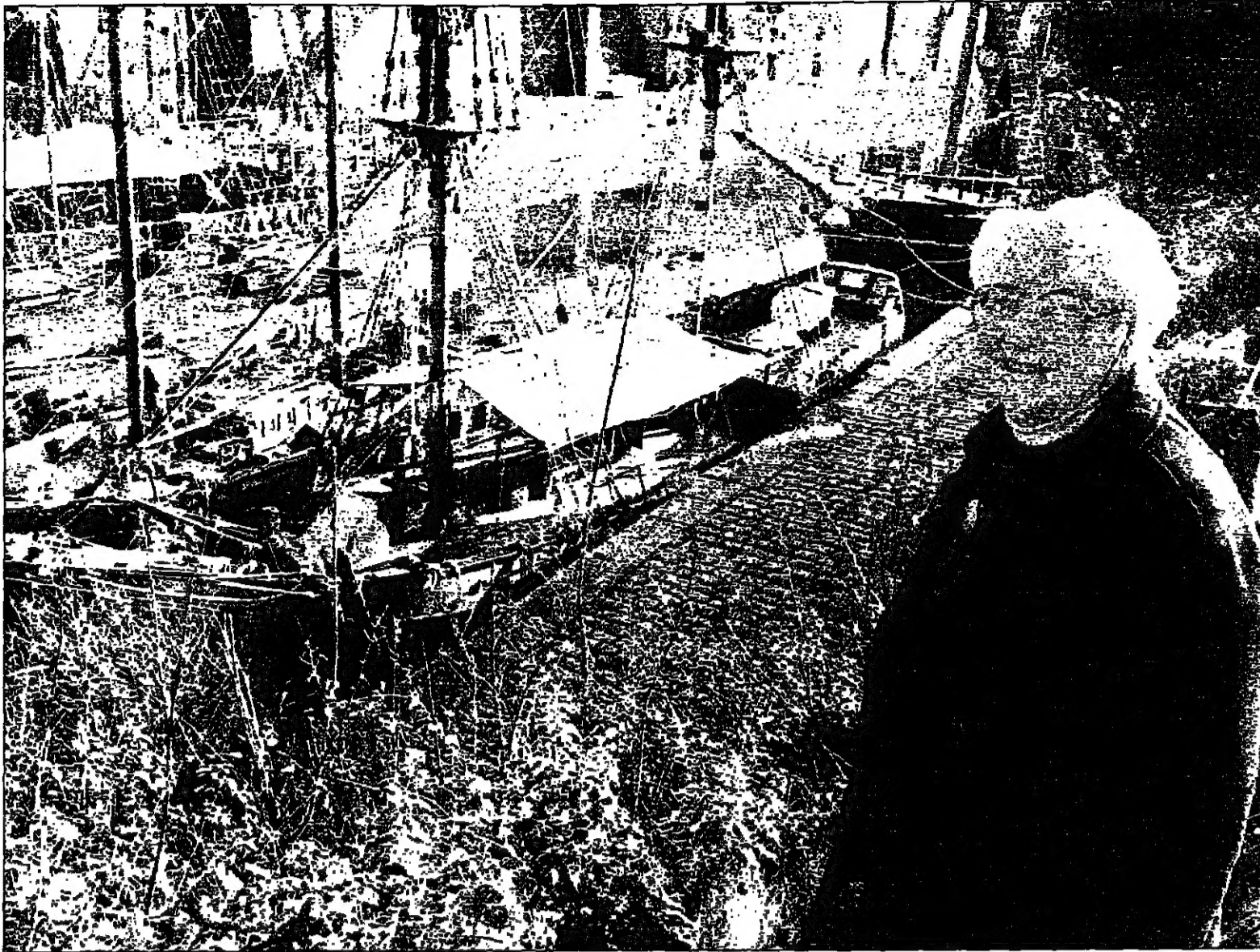
The report says that more stringent immigration controls had failed to reassure the public. The portrayal of tough immigration controls as a condition for good race relations had a negative impact on public attitudes towards members of the ethnic minorities.

Ms Alibhai-Brown says that if the Government can promote its economic and social policies through the media, it could do the same for race relations.

The latest government figures show that 5.7 per cent of civil servants are from ethnic minorities and 53, or 1.6 per cent, were in the 4,000 most senior posts. No one from an ethnic minority has been appointed a permanent secretary, although one applied for a post recently.

Sumar Chakrabarti, 39, head of the Cabinet Office performance innovation unit, is the most senior Whitehall official from an ethnic minority.

Most Asians and blacks in the Civil Service earn between £10,000 and £15,000 a year as clerks and secretaries. About 12 earn £45,000 a year as middle-ranking officials.



Hilary Shaw and the brig Phoenix, in which the pilgrims will undergo some of the privations experienced by their medieval forebears, below



Pilgrims to set sail on journey through past

AN ANCIENT pilgrims' route from Cornwall to one of Europe's most sacred shrines is being revived for the first time since the Reformation.

In May 25 pilgrims will set off from the tiny port of Fowey on board two historic sailing ships bound for La Coruña in northern Spain. They will be following in the footsteps of thousands of medieval pilgrims who made the gruelling journey to the shrine at Santiago de Compostela until pilgrimage was ended by Henry VIII during the Reformation.

After the arduous five-day crossing, the pilgrims will walk the remaining 50 miles to Santiago, where the bones of St James are said to be buried. They will be joining an estimated ten million Roman Catholics expected to make the pilgrimage from all over Europe as the end of the millennium coincides with a "saint's year" for St James. Every year, tens of thousands follow the ancient routes over the Pyrenees from France.

By making the journey to Santiago, they will receive the

**Simon de
Bruxelles on
an arduous
trip not made
since the
Reformation**

church's plenary indulgence, wiping the spiritual slate clean. However, to qualify for a pilgrimage certificate, most will have to walk, or travel hundreds of miles by donkey, as the Church does not consider modern transport sufficient.

The Bredereth Sen Jago, Cornish for the Pilgrims of St James, will qualify because they will travel under sail in a manner similar to their medieval predecessors.

The group's main problem was finding authentic sailing ships, until a naval architect suggested Square Sail. The company, based in the historic port of Charlestown,

Dorset, operates a small fleet of square-rigged sailing ships used regularly by film companies. The pilgrims will travel on the brig Phoenix and the schooner Carrie, both of which have few modern conveniences, save for 20th-century safety and navigation equipment.

Chris Wilson, of Square Sail, said: "The objective is to sail to Spain in convoy, making 100 miles a day, exactly how the early pilgrims would have travelled."

Hilary Shaw, who has organised the pilgrimage, said: "We will have to undergo some privations, but that will tell the strength of our belief. After all, imagine what it must have been like for the original pilgrims."

Before they board their ships, the pilgrims, who come from all over Britain, face a two-day 25-mile trek across Cornwall along the Saints' Way path. Medieval travellers, many from Ireland and Wales, would gather at St Petrock's church in Padstow before making their way to Fowey.

Ramblers protest at barbed wire of the law

By AMANDA BROWN

TWO English ramblers were symbolically cut free from a barbed-wire cage by an MP at the Scottish border yesterday.

Gordon Prentice, Labour Member for Pendle, is trying to get a Private Member's Bill through Parliament that will give English walkers a similar legal freedom to roam as those proposed for Scottish ramblers.

Michael Meacher, the Environment Minister, inaugurated a consultation on the issue last summer and is shortly to decide whether to introduce legislation in England and Wales. The Ramblers' Association wants to persuade the Government to stick to its pre-election pledge of laws opening up uncultivated land in England and Wales.

More than 100 Labour MPs are backing Mr Prentice's Right to Roam Bill, which is scheduled for a second reading in the Commons on March 26.

Ministers have reportedly decided that the Bill should not become law. Mr Meacher, a ramble himself, wants landowners and farmers to reach voluntary agreements with walkers. If that does not happen within two years, laws would follow.

Mr Meacher is thought to be planning the Government's own Right to Roam proposals before the Prentice Bill is debated. Such a move would be unlikely to satisfy Labour MPs, who fear that the Government's scheme will make it too easy for landowners to keep ramblers off their land.

Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, announced proposed rights of access to Scotland's countryside last week. To be introduced if Labour takes control of the Scottish Parliament, the Scottish Countryside Access Code would be drawn up by Scottish Natural Heritage. (PA News)

Photograph, page 24



Prentice wants equality for English ramblers

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66% say Dome is a waste of money

By PETER WOODMAN

THE £78 million Millennium Dome has been given a thumbs down from the public in a survey today about year 2000 celebrations.

An NOP poll last week showed that nine out of ten adults thought too much was being spent on the giant structure in Greenwich, southeast London. Today's survey shows that two out of three adults believe the Dome to be a waste of money, with three in four believing that too much fuss is being made of the millennium.

The survey of 500 people, for CIA Mediamarket, showed that 86 per cent of Londoners oppose the Dome, compared with a national average of 70 per cent.

Of those surveyed, 24 per cent said that they would not be celebrating the millennium; 42 per cent of over-65s will not be marking the occasion, nor will 12 per cent of 15 to 24-year-olds. Among those aged 35 or over, 99 per cent thought that too much was being made of the arrival of the millennium, compared with a national average of 76 per cent. More than a third of those questioned were excited about the year 2000, with almost three in five of 15 to 24-year-olds really looking forward to it.

The survey also found that more than one person in three is concerned about the millennium bug. "The public is already showing distinct signs of burnout with the hype surrounding the millennium," David Fletcher, of the media agency, said. "Advertisers and media alike should be wary of overegging the millennium pudding." (PA News)

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	£25,000,000 - £99,999,999	5.60	5.60
Novus 30 Offshore	£150,000 - £500,000	6.10	6.10
	£500,000 - £1,499,999	6.00	6.00
	£1,500,000 - £4,999,999	5.90	5.90
	£5,000,000 - £24,999,999	5.80	5.80
	£25,000,000 - £99,999,999	5.70	5.70
Novus 75 Offshore	£150,000 - £500,000	6.25	6.25
	£500,000 - £1,499,999	6.15	6.15
	£1,500,000 - £4,999,999	6.10	6.10
	£5,000,000 - £24,999,999	6.00	6.00
	£25,000,000 - £99,999,999	5.90	5.90
Novus Star Offshore	£150,000 - £500,000	6.15	6.15
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Company pension is bad for job security

MEN who join company pension schemes are 50 per cent more likely to lose their jobs involuntarily than those who do not, a study shows.

Research published today by the London School of Economics says middle-aged men on above-average salaries, who may be tempted to think their generous remuneration packages are a reflection of how their employers value their services, are among the most vulnerable to company downsizing.

The report by the LSE's Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion shows that employment for men aged 50 and over has declined faster than for any other age group.

Alexandra Fearn on study that shows well-paid older men in firms' schemes face bigger risk of redundancy

Two fifths of men aged 55 to 65 are without work, compared to one fifth in 1979 — a loss of 600,000 jobs for that age group alone.

Nigel Campbell, the report's author, said men aged 45 and over who were at the bottom of the pay scale were the most likely to lose their jobs. Those on above-average earnings were likely to have greater job security, provided they did not have a company pension.

"Men in their early 50s with an occupational pension and in the top quartile of the wage distribution

are 50 per cent more likely to be displaced from their job than men of the same age and wages but no occupational pension," he said.

Although some men took a willing decision to retire early, most did so reluctantly. There was evidence that pension scheme membership made it more likely that people on higher earnings would be pushed out and offered early retirement because employers wanted to cut the costs of making salary-related pension contributions.

The findings are likely to cause concern to the Government at a time when it is trying to reduce dependency on the state pension and encourage people to save for old age through company and private schemes or stakeholder pensions.

Government concern was prompted by research from the Pensions Review Group, which forecast that up to five million people could see their incomes fall by more than half on retirement because their pension provision would be inadequate. Professor John Hills, director of the centre, said the LSE study

held important implications for future pensions provision, not least because it found that relatively few older people returned to work once they had left the labour market. The return to work rate for men aged 45 to 49 who lose their job is 49 per cent.

As a result, Professor Hills said, the growing ranks of men forced to retire early and who lacked sufficient accumulated pension rights risked swelling the ranks of the poor and socially excluded.

The postwar assumption was

that people would work for 40 years of their life. But the trend towards early retirement means that working lives of 30 years are no longer uncommon. As a matter of simple arithmetic, that makes it more difficult for individuals to achieve sufficient pension provision for themselves," he said.

The findings come as no surprise to John Hurst, 60, a credit control manager from Bristol who was asked by his employer to take early retirement two years ago. He has been unable to find a permanent

job since. "I lost my job because they wanted someone younger in the post, although they would never dare say so. It is hard for me to get a job now — I have more experience and knowledge than most of the people I would be working for," he said.

Mr Hurst, who had expected his retirement to be "comfortable", is worried that he will have to rely on the state pension to top up his diminished company pension.

□ *The Decline of Employment Among Older People in Britain* is based on data drawn from the Labour Force Survey and the British Household Panel Survey.

Attenborough pleads for Chipperfield chimpanzees

By Helen Johnstone

SIR David Attenborough was among campaigners who called yesterday for the release of four chimpanzees still under the care of Mary Chipperfield, the animal trainer convicted of cruelty last month.

Chipperfield was found guilty on January 27 of 12 counts of cruelty to an 18-month-old chimpanzee, Trudy, who was kicked and whipped and spent 15 hours a day in a "darkened box". The animal is reported to be thriving at Monkey World, an animal sanctuary in which it was placed ten months ago.

Jim Cronin, the owner of Monkey World, said yesterday: "Mary Chipperfield still has four other chimps in her possession and we are very worried about their safety." He said they included Trudy's brother, Teddy, five, a 27-year-old female believed to be her mother, and two others, one of which could be her father.

He added: "We want them here. She is clearly not a woman who can be trusted to look after these wonderful, sensi-

tive and highly social animals."

During her seven-day trial, Chipperfield, 61, said on oath that she regretted nothing and would do the same again. Immediately after her conviction, she indicated that she intended to return Trudy to her training quarters in Hampshire. Her counsel said that she could not be stopped, as the animal was owned by Mary Chipperfield Promotions Ltd, which had not been convicted.

Sir David and Jane Goodall, a world-renowned expert on chimpanzees, have been assessing Trudy's progress at Monkey World, near Wareham, Dorset.

Sir David said a secretly filmed video of Chipperfield's abuse of Trudy, which led to her conviction, was an atrocity. "It is one of the most agonising things I have seen for a very long time."

Comparing the animal in the film to the excitable, boisterous chimpanzee he saw at Monkey World yesterday, he said: "The idea that the law should be so inhuman as to remove that little infant from the company of her new family and return her to unspeakable conditions is intolerable."

Dr Goodall, who cares for over 100 orphaned chimpanzees in Africa, said Chipperfield should never be allowed to keep animals or work with them again. "Chimpanzees in the wild stay with their mother until they are at least five. Even then they still stay near her and help out with the other young ones." To take Trudy away now would be to re-orphan an orphan. "It cannot be allowed to happen."



Trudy: recovering from being kicked and whipped



Steve Etches with an ammonite he found on the Dorset coast near Kimmeridge. The plumber has become an expert on the area's fossil layer

Plumber makes his Jurassic mark

A self-taught amateur has transformed the study of fossils; writes Simon de Bruxelles

ONE man's obsession with fossil collecting has opened a window on the lost world of Britain's Jurassic past. Steve Etches, a plumber who left school without a qualification to his name, has single-handedly repopulated Britain's ancient seas with giant carnivorous reptiles, strange fish and swarms of swimming molluscs.

Until recently geologists had little idea of the variety of creatures in the seas around and over Britain in the Jurassic era 150 million years ago. Mr Etches has changed that by studying the Kimmeridge Clay, long neglected because it was believed to contain few fossils of interest. Deposited across northern Europe in the Jurassic era, it was considered of importance mainly because of its oil.

Mr Etches, 49, first took an interest

in fossils in his late twenties, and decided to concentrate on the Kimmeridge Clay rather than the easy pickings at well-known sites such as Lyme Regis. Named after the Dorset village where he now lives, the clay is exposed in the cliffs and beaches of the area.

The tropical Jurassic sea was deep and perfectly calm at the bottom, and a steady rain of sediment quickly buried the dead creatures that sank there. Some fossils are remarkably well preserved — even the soft parts normally lost, such as the ink sacs of squid and a ray's wings. By developing his own techniques and using compressed air

tools, Mr Etches was able to recover them from their shale shell.

The fossils include the two-metre jawbone of a plesiosaur, the largest carnivorous reptile known to have lived, entire lobsters, sharks, turtles and shoals of beautifully preserved fish and fossil ammonites. The bones reveal a world in which the largest got larger and everything else got eaten. Almost every bone shows signs of having been someone's dinner.

Mr Etches, who moved to Kimmeridge to be closer to the deposits, said: "I was going around to museums telling them that what they thought

were scratches were tooth marks. Until I came along, this record of predation went almost unnoticed. Now everyone can see it."

Although he is consulted by palaeontologists from around the world, for five days a week he installs central heating systems. One day he hopes to open his collection to the public and work on his scientific papers, but he has to earn a living.

He says his wife, Sue, and three children have no interest in fossils and think he is mad. Too often they have had to help to carry some promising-looking boulder back to his workshop.

Mr Etches has two regrets: "That I didn't begin collecting fossils earlier and that I can't afford to devote all my time to them. That is what I really have a gift for."

Blunkett rejects calls for inspector to resign

By John O'Leary
Education Editor

THE Education Secretary rejected calls yesterday for the resignation of Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools, over his suggestion that affairs between teachers and sixth formers could be "educative on both sides".

Mr Woodhead gave a series of interviews apologising for the remark, made in answer to a student teacher at a seminar almost a fortnight ago. He said the statement did not reflect his true views and had been made to reassure the questioner.

Academics dismissed claims that Mr Woodhead had been "set up" by opponents who were trying to make use of an affair he had with a former pupil 20 years ago. However, Toby Parkin, a secondary school trainee teacher on a four-year BEd course at Exeter University, was said last night to have asked Mr Woodhead the question because he knew about his affair.

Another student said: "He was trying to catch him out. He doesn't agree with what he has done."

David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said the "gaffe" could undermine confidence in the Office for Standards in Education. "There must be a substantial question mark over his position."

However, David Blunkett, the Education and Employment Secretary, said Mr Woodhead still had an important contribution to make to the scrutiny of schools and the drive to improve standards.

"Despite what Chris Woodhead has acknowledged to be an unfortunate incident, I believe it does not prevent him from continuing to do his job effectively," he said.

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Mugabe denounces British 'saboteurs'

ZIMBABWE was yesterday gripped by its gravest diplomatic and constitutional crisis since independence in 1980 after President Mugabe accused Britain of infiltrating agents to undermine him and threatened to dismiss judges critical of his human rights record.

In an unscheduled broadcast to the nation, Mr Mugabe said two journalists who claimed they were tortured in the custody of military police had fabricated reports of a coup plot among soldiers opposed to Zimbabwe's intervention in the war in the Republic of Congo.

Mr Mugabe, 75, accused Zimbabwe's 70,000 whites of fomenting unrest. "Let me state this quite emphatically — they have pushed our sense of racial tolerance to the limit," he said in an emotional and rambling 25-minute address.

Members of the European Union, the United States, Japan, Canada, and Australia, which have protested over the

In confronting judges, the Harare leader has attacked 'agents in our midst', writes Michael Hartnack

treatment of Mark Chavunduka, editor of the *Zimbabwe Standard*, and Ray Choto, a reporter, were yesterday understood to be seeking full transcripts of the broadcast.

Diplomatic sources believe Mr Mugabe has discredited pledges of government reform which he made last month to the International Monetary Fund, in the hope of \$88 million (£55 million) in support for the stricken economy.

However, David Coltart, a human rights lawyer named by Mr Mugabe among whites "bent on ruining the national unity and loyalty of our people," said the gravest immediate threat was to the judges now facing removal for protesting at repeated contempt of court by ministers over the journalists' treatment.

Mr Mugabe claimed he had

the constitutional power to appoint judges and said those who had called for assurances that he would observe the rule of law were guilty of "utter indiscretion" — an outrageous act of judicial impudence.

They could not be impartial in future cases involving the *Zimbabwe Standard* nor, he implied, pending appeals by 841 white farmers against seizure of their land for redistribution to black Zimbabweans.

Anthony Gubbay, the British-born Chief Justice, was out of the country when Supreme Court judges Nicholas McNally, Simbarashe Mchedechere and Wilson Sandura last month sent a letter warning of "a descent into anarchy" to Mr Mugabe. This was backed by Mr Justice Ishmail Adam on behalf of the 27 judges of the High Court bench. Chief Jus-

tice Gubbay yesterday maintained silence on the crisis.

Mr Mugabe said peace was "clearly being undermined by some white persons of British extraction who have been planted in our midst to undertake acts of sabotage aimed at affecting the loyalty of not just our people in general but also that of vital arms of government like the army, so these can turn against the legitimate Government of this country."

Mr Mugabe said whites "must atone for the sins of their evil past... let them be warned that, unless their insidious acts cease, my Government will not hesitate in taking stern measures against them and those who have elected to be their puppets."

Geoffrey Nyarota, editor-in-chief of the new Associated Newspapers group, which plans to challenge Mr Mugabe's monopoly of the state-owned press, yesterday confirmed that Tony O'Reilly, the Irish magnate, had abandoned plans for a 14 per cent shareholding.



One of 20,000 brides uses binoculars to follow proceedings as the Rev Sun Myung Moon conducts a mass marriage ceremony at Seoul's Olympic stadium. As the charismatic head of the Uni-

Moonstruck newlyweds

fication Church blessed the 40,000 newlyweds yesterday, millions of other "Moonies" around the world took part

in the "Blessing '99" service via a live satellite broadcast and the Internet. Most of the unmarried couples from 193

countries taking part in the controversial South Korean leader's annual ceremony were said to have been matched through photographs and met only hours or days beforehand. (AFP)

WORLD SUMMARY

Ethiopia conflict resumes

Nairobi: Ethiopia and Eritrea said their forces were engaged in full-scale conflict along their disputed border, after the first outbreak of clashes since hundreds of people were killed in fighting between the two countries last May (Robin Lodge writes).

Ethiopia accused Eritrea of bombing Ethiopian positions on Friday near the disputed enclave of Badme, occupied by Eritrean forces in last year's clashes. Eritrea said that Ethiopia had started the offensive with ground troops backed by helicopter gunships.

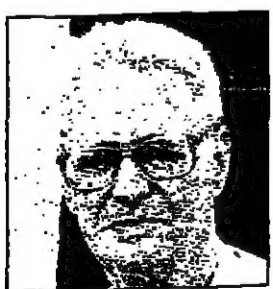
Activist kills himself

Karachi: Agha Jehangir Khan, 35 — a Pakistan People's Party activist confined to a wheelchair since being wounded in 1986 when opposing the then military Government — shot himself dead at a Sukkur news conference in southern Sindh. He said: "I have fought for democracy but now I am helpless." (AFP)

China seizes dissident

Beijing: Wang Zechen, a dissident who challenged the Communist Party by helping to form branches of the banned Chinese Democratic Party last week, was arrested as China prepared for a human rights dialogue with the European Union in Berlin today (James Pringle writes).

Exiled King in custody



Johannesburg: The exiled King Leka Zog of Albania, above, spent the weekend in a South African prison after police raided his home and seized weapons (Ray Kennedy writes). The raid came after President Mandela withdrew his diplomatic privileges.

France loses last cavalier

Paris: Lieutenant-Colonel Jean Ballarin, who in January 1941 led the last charge on horseback in the history of the French cavalry, against the Italians at Umbria in Eritrea, died aged 85, friends said. (Reuters)



Monica Lewinsky's face adorns packs of special cigars now selling well in the Philippines

Clinton accusers rejected by own party

By DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON

WITH the impeachment trial of President Clinton expected to end in acquittal this week, it appeared last night that even Republican support for conviction was dwindling.

It has been clear for some time that the required two thirds of the 100-member Senate will not find the President guilty of the charges before them and remove him from office.

But, in a blow to the Republican members of the House of Representatives who are acting as prosecutors, a sizeable group of senators from their own party have been suggesting that they will find Mr Clinton guilty of obstructing justice. However, they are unconvinced that he lied under oath about his relationship with Monica Lewinsky.

Disquiet about the effectiveness of the prosecution — which signals that the trial inquest will be long and painful — does not mean that senators regard Mr Clinton as innocent of perjury. But they have not been persuaded that his conduct rises to the level of an impeachable offence.

"Most everybody agrees, to some degree, there's been some lying, there's been some obstruction of justice. You have different views, I guess, as to what you do about it," said Craig Thomas, a Republican senator.

Closing arguments begin today with a vote on the articles of impeachment likely by Friday. It remains unclear whether a simple majority of senators could pass an additional "finding of facts" motion finding Mr Clinton guilty but not removing him from office.

Democrats hope Republicans will then join them instead in rebuking Mr Clinton with a censure motion. But there would clearly be some battles over wording.

Controversy erupted yesterday over Sidney Blumenthal, the senior aide, who testified last week that the President had told him Ms Lewinsky was a "stalker". He was seen on videotape denying responsibility for that description being leaked to the press early in the scandal.

But Christopher Hitchens, a Washington-based British journalist, has signed an affidavit stating the description was used several times during a lunch.

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Rambouillet château, where the Kosovo talks are being held behind closed doors

First step taken to Kosovo deal

FROM TOM WALKER IN RAMBOUILLET AND ANTHONY LOYD IN PRISTINA

THE first tentative steps towards a peace deal between ethnic Albanian guerrillas and Serbian and Yugoslav officials remained hidden behind the gates of Château Rambouillet yesterday.

The sleepy little suburb of Paris was engulfed by the satellite dishes and digital technology of the modern media bandwagon, but by nightfall few were any the wiser as to whether any real dialogue between the two warring sides had

been established. The various spokesmen charged with briefing the press corps gave out what slim pickings of information there were: riot police backed by batteries of anti-aircraft missiles within the château grounds were on hand to put off the more inquisitive.

Only hours after the negotiations opened, three ethnic Albanians were killed in a bomb explosion in the centre of Pristina on Saturday. The attack was the latest in a series

of grenade attacks on Pristina cafés over the past week which have brought the war to the city. The recent wave of attacks have hit both Serb and Albanian bars and appear to have been triggered by the killing of 24 Albanians by Serb security forces nine days ago.

Differing from the previous pattern, in both its power and targeting, Saturday's device went off outside a mini-market. The three dead, who included a woman and teen-

age girl, were shredded into pieces. In Rambouillet, the US spokesman, Phil Reeker, emerged to read a statement agreed by both Serbs and Albanians denouncing the Pristina bomb. Later, Serb sources claimed a ten-point list of principles had been concluded which spoke about autonomy rather than independence for Kosovo.

A Western diplomat dismissed such Serb claims as "pure spin". All that was happening inside, he

said, was "a clearing of undergrowth so that they can at least begin talking about the less contentious issues".

These, he said, included the make-up of a new parliament for Kosovo, and details of how to establish a customs union and single market with the rest of Yugoslavia. An option for a territorial split of Kosovo — now much favoured by the Serbs — was not on the table, he insisted.

"There are no maps here, and that's the big difference with the Dayton conference for Bosnia," he said. "But I can't rule it out for next week."

The splendours of Rambouillet, a favourite haunt for both Louis XVI and Napoleon, were a world away from the blighted Balkan province. Speaking on his mobile phone while jogging off a heavy lunch, one source described a buffet of salmon mousse, dozens of salads,

hot dishes of prawns, and a beef casserole, chocolate mousse and "a wide selection of other puddings".

It was quite possible for the Kosovo Liberation Army team and the Serbs to bump into one another while heading for this feast, although their negotiating rooms were separated. The Franco-British delegation that set up the conference insisted that no provocative insignia or imagery be used by either side.



Serbian Orthodox priests, invited as observers to the Paris talks, have their passports checked at Belgrade airport yesterday



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Kohl's vision in jeopardy as his party looks to the right

INSIDE GERMANY



BY ROGER BOYES

THE other day the ex-Chancellor, Helmut Kohl, was tucking into a slap-up meal at his favourite Bonn restaurant, Il Puntino, with Romano Prodi, the former Italian Prime Minister. On the other side of the room, Oskar Lafontaine, the Finance Minister, was also enjoying his food.

In some ways, Il Puntino has become the cauldron of the German political class. Suddenly an emissary interrupted Herr Kohl — Gerhard Schröder, the Chancellor, would be honoured if his predecessor and Professor Prodi could come around for a conversation that evening. Herr Kohl is not a man to refuse a second dinner and was soon on his way.

This is by way of explaining what Herr Kohl is up to. While he broods over his memoirs, he has become an informal international consultant taking calls from Bill Clinton and Jacques Santer. But he is also a backbencher who makes occasional appearances at meetings of the Christian Democratic leadership. Banquo's ghost in Bonn. Naturally, this is slowing down the debate about whether dumping the Kohl legacy is the necessary precondition for scrambling back to power.

How to resuscitate German Christian democracy, whether to inject it with a dose of Thatcher-style conservatism, is the most intriguing riddle in Bonn. Will the Opposition follow the siren call of Edmund Stoiber, the Bavarian Prime Minister, and become more Eurosceptic? Will it break with the German consensus on Europe? Will it lurch towards the right, take on a more clearly contoured national conservatism?

These questions lurked behind yesterday's Hesse state elections, which were perhaps the first indirect voter verdict on Herr Schröder's Social Democrat-Green Government. The Social Democrats and Greens lost heavily, and if early projections are reliable may lose power in the region. For the Christian Democrats, who emerged as the strongest party under Roland Koch, the vote could mark a watershed.

Herr Koch — who has the charisma of a block of wood — had talked up the "threat" of foreigners being granted double citizenship. That, and unemployment, was enough to whip up support. If the Christian Democratic cam-

paign for other regional elections is fuelled by an anti-immigration mood, Wolfgang Schäuble, the party's national leader, will be fatally compromised. So will his efforts to keep some of the policy continuities from the Kohl era. Next year Christian Democrats must work out who will challenge Herr Schröder in 2002. The best bet now is that Herr Stoiber will get the job.

Some serious groundwork has to be completed before a Bavarian can lead Germany from Prussian Berlin. Herr Stoiber has to find themes on truly national causes. One is the question of immigration. It was Herr Stoiber who forced the pace on the current nationwide petition against government plans to extend citizenship rights to long-term foreign residents.

So far more than one million Germans have signed their opposition to the draft law. The tone around the trestle-tables set up in shopping precincts by the Christian Democrats is nasty. Signatories questioned about their motives often spit out xenophobic drivel. Herr Stoiber's other big cause is Europe — hostility to Agenda 2000, to any tinkering with the common agricultural policy, worries about rapid eastward enlargement, contempt for Brussels bureaucracy and fraud, and a very obvious reluctance to celebrate the euro.

After the Hesse vote, the Christian Democrats will start gearing up for the European elections. Then it will become clear how quickly the party is willing to drop Herr Kohl overboard in the pursuit of voters. The unspoken assumption is that it was Herr Kohl who lost the last election. Soon this view will be spoken out loud and we will see how much of the Kohl European vision survives. Meanwhile, I shall be keeping my eyes open at Il Puntino.

Vatican is accused by shot Guard's mother

Rome: The mother of a Swiss Guardsman who the Vatican says shot his commander and committed suicide accused Vatican officials yesterday of covering up the truth in their final report, to be released today, which declares the case "shelved" (Richard Owen writes).

Mugette Baudat-Tornay, who lives in Switzerland, said she had "documentary proof" that her son, Vice-Corporal

Cedric Tornay, had been killed with two others as part of a "Vatican plot".

She said she had been threatened by "emissaries from Rome", who warned her to accept the official version of the tragedy and halt her own investigations. Colonel Alois Estermann, 44, his Venezuelan wife Gladys, 49, and Tornay, 23, were found dead from gunshot wounds inside the Vatican last May.

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Young Queen will need her healing touch



Christopher Walker profiles the new King's respected wife, who is a pioneer of charitable causes

THE accession of King Abdullah II to the Hashemite throne has also thrust into the spotlight his Palestinian wife, Rania. Photogenic, highly intelligent and modest, at 28 she seems destined to become an international role model like Hussein's widow, Queen Noor, and to be seen as a successor to the mantle of the late Diana, Princess of Wales, as a dazzling royal involved in charitable causes.

As well as having a crucial role as a Palestinian in helping to unify a nation whose population is uncomfortably divided between the 60 per cent majority of Palestinian descent and the 40 per cent East Bank Arabs of Beduin tribal stock, Queen Rania will also have to mend the internal divisions in the ruling family worsened by the palace intrigues which scarred the last months of Hussein's 47-year reign.

"It will be the task of Rania to try to bring the relatives of the late King together and to try to heal the breaches that led to feuds deeply damaging to the future of the kingdom," said an Amman businessman. "She will have succeeded if she can dampen the rumours about jealousy and family promotion that have become part of our life these last weeks."

Being fully of Arab blood and also a Muslim from a well-established family that originated in the West Bank town of Tulkarm and later

moved, like so many enterprising Palestinian families, to Kuwait, Queen Rania is being compared with Hussein's third wife, Alia, also a beautiful Palestinian with West Bank roots, who died in a helicopter crash in 1977.

Unlike Princess Muna (née Toni Gardiner), the Ipswich-born mother of the new King, and Queen Noor, previously Lisa Halaby, daughter of an American family of Lebanese descent, Queen Rania will not have the handicap of being regarded as foreign.

Rania al-Yassin was born on August 31, 1970, in Kuwait where her father was a doctor. After the 1991 Gulf War, like most of the 300,000 Palestinians then living in the oil-rich emirate, the al-Yassin family was forced to leave after being accused of co-operating with the Iraqi occupiers. They moved to Jordan.

"Rania met Abdullah through mutual acquaintances in Amman and immediately changed his life, persuading him to abandon the fast living for which he had been previously known," said one Jordanian source. "At the time, she had been thinking of marrying someone else, but with the Prince it was an instant love match."

Since their wedding on June 10, 1993, at a glittering ceremony presided over by Hussein, the couple have had two children, Hussein, born in 1994,



Queen Rania with Prince Hussein, her elder son, who was born to her and Abdullah in 1994

and Iman, in 1996. "Rania is one of the most intelligent members of the Royal Family, well versed and genuinely interested in world literature — when I met her we had a long conversation about Dostoevsky," said Toujan Faisal, a leading member of the Opposition and, until she lost her seat

in 1997, Jordan's only woman MP. Mrs Faisal added: "Many Jordanians are very happy that their new Queen is a serious-minded but very pretty Arab. Noor was seen as too Westernised, too ambitious for her son Hamzah, and much too into the glitzy world of lav-

ish spending and Western fashion for the Queen of a sober Muslim nation."

Queen Noor's dutiful and touching attention to her dying husband did much to silence her opponents. But Mrs Faisal, an acerbic critic of the Royal Family, said: "In the West, we know that Queen Noor is something of a glamour figure, much admired in the media. Here in Jordan, men and women alike found her not really part of the nation like Rania will be."

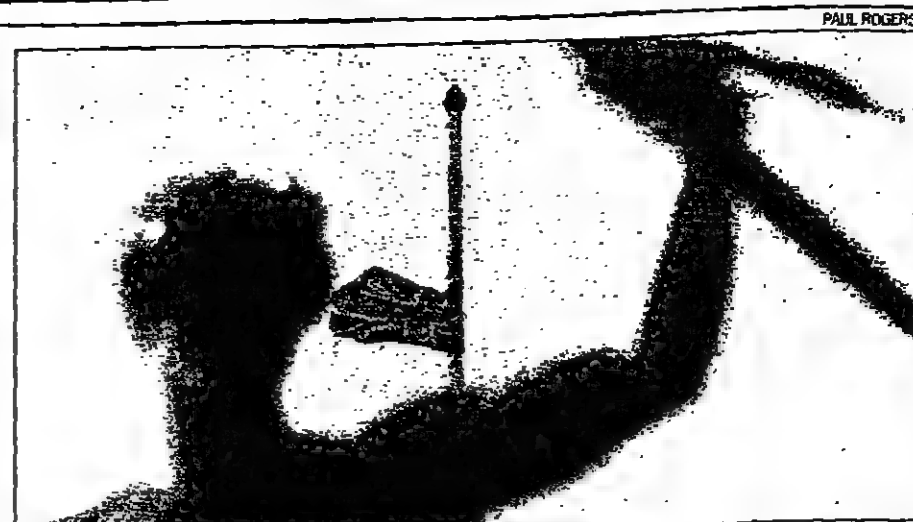
As well as being regarded as a good mother, Queen Rania has raised eyebrows and won praise from the less conservative members of Jordanian society by establishing a help system for battered and abused children, standing up for children's rights and tackling issues often regarded as taboo.

As the struggle for the succession intensified behind the scenes, Rania had to endure rumours spread by backers of her rivals, the Pakistan-born Princess Sarvath, the widely disliked wife of the deposed Crown Prince Hassan, 51, and Queen Noor, who was promoting the idea of her 18-year-old son, Hamzah, becoming heir apparent.

She brushed off the rumours and managed to blend her traditional background with a modern image befitting a new generation of Hashemite royals by being seen eating with her family in Amman's Hard Rock Café. "She is a very intelligent young woman, kind and unaffected, as members of the al-Yassin family often are," said one Amman-based diplomat.

For the outside world, the most poignant images of her came on January 19 at Amman's Marka airport when the King returned after six months of a supposedly successful cancer treatment at the controls of his plane and she was seen on television wiping away tears. "They were tears of joy," a close friend said.

"Like all of us at the time, she thought the King had managed to beat his cancer."



The Buckingham Palace flag flying at half mast yesterday for King Hussein

World hails King whose majesty was of the spirit

By DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON AND CHRIS BROADHURST

KING HUSSEIN'S death was mourned by world leaders across religious and political boundaries.

Tony Blair said the King was "a remarkable man, a man of courage and integrity, but above all a man of extraordinary inner strength and humility. We thank him for his life, for his work, his dedication to peace."

Baroness Thatcher said: "No one can ever take his place. He will have a very distinguished place in history."

President Clinton said the King was a magnificent man whose nobility came from his character not his title.

"Many times his life was threatened but each brush with mortality ennobled

REACTION

him. He grew in wisdom and so did Jordan. He grew in stature and so did Jordan."

Mr Clinton singled out his determination to ensure that a Middle East peace deal was signed at the Wye summit last year. "It was not going too well and he came out and within a few minutes changed the tenor of the meeting. The smallest man in the room was the largest. The frailest, the strongest. The man with the least time reminded us that we were working not just for ourselves but for eternity. Today my friend is in paradise and God has welcomed home a faithful servant."

Henry Kissinger, the former US Secretary of State, said: "He was the leader of

the smallest country with the smallest population and the least resources of all the nations participating in the peace process, but through his diplomacy he demonstrated what leadership and moral conviction can achieve."

Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary-General, said: "The world mourns the passing of a King whose true majesty found expression in a life-long struggle to bring peace to the ordinary men and women of the Middle East."

Lionel Jospin, the French Prime Minister, said he was "a man of courage and fidelity [who] devoted his reign to the pursuit of development and security for his country".

Gerhard Schröder, the German Chancellor, said he had acted with "wisdom, far-sightedness and tireless personal commitment".

Israel mourns a 'loyal friend'

FROM DINA SHILOH IN TEL AVIV

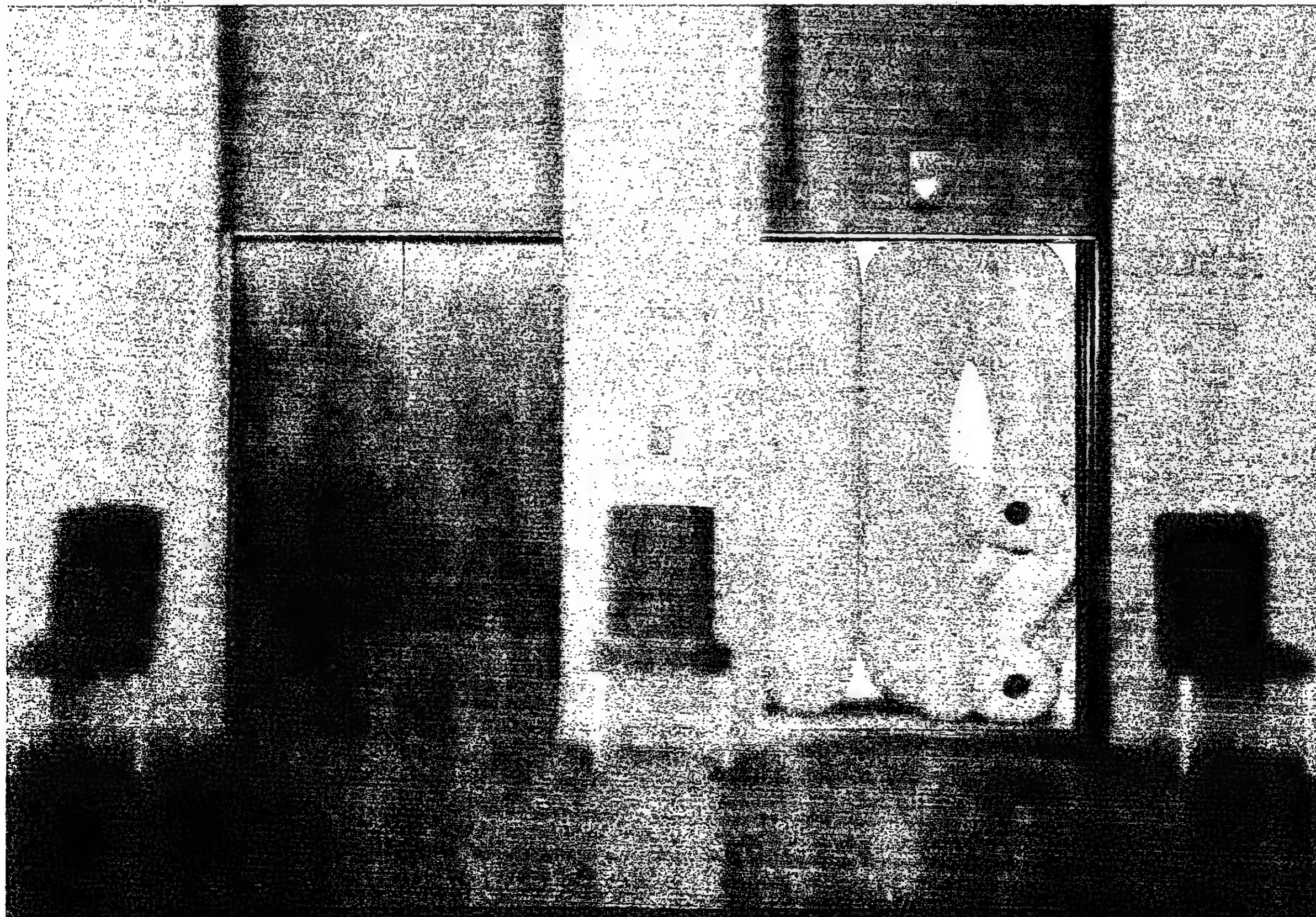
THE Israeli Prime Minister called a special Cabinet meeting to discuss all the consequences of the King's death, and Israel's elections, set for May 17, may be postponed.

Afterwards Benjamin Netanyahu said: "The Government and people of Israel bow their heads in grief over the passing of King Hussein,

a courageous leader, a loyal friend, a maker of peace in Israel. King Hussein was one of the few leaders who is recognised, even in his lifetime, as an historic figure."

"On a more personal level, there was no one more gracious, considerate and kind. No one more hospitable or generous. We are certain his son, Abdullah, will continue in his way and strengthen the peace between us."

President Weizman said: "King Hussein was one of the great leaders of the 20th century... We in Israel and all in the Middle East have a duty to follow his path of peace." Ehud Barak, the Opposition leader, said the King took part in the wars against Israel, but the moment he realised there would be no stability and security in the region he jumped into the cold water and made peace."



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BY CHRISTOPHER WALKER
IN AMMAN

All eyes in the Middle East will be focused on the new



JORDAN MOURNS HUSSEIN

The novice 37-year-old leader of a country sandwiched precariously between Israel and the Arab dictatorships of Iraq and Syria, a former Special Forces commander with only two weeks' experience as heir

"The Hashemites have united behind Abdullah. That is what the late, great King would have wanted," claimed one official as hundreds of foreign journalists besieged Jordan's main hotel, the Amman



King Abdullah, speaking on television last night, calls for unity between Jordan's Palestinians and tribal Arabs.

Although Hussein's demise was a foregone conclusion once he was placed on a life-support machine last week,

4.6 million Jordanians appeared totally unprepared, and were plunged into mass public grief, uncannily reflected in the weather which blanketed Amman in a rare, and clammy, winter fog. "I love

him more than my family. It is like losing a father," said a 23-year-old accountant, Mohamed Ahram, one of 2,000 people who had gathered outside the gates of the medical centre where the late King was taken.

after his return from failed cancer treatment in the US. Within hours of the death, a 40-day mourning period began, black flags went up on buildings and Muslims and Christians prayed in the streets.

Saudi Arabia
King Fahd



The Saudi leader took the throne on June 3, 1982 — on the death of his half-brother, King Khaled — as the fifth sovereign of a state founded in 1932. He suffered a stroke in 1995 and has handed over the day-to-day running of the Government to Crown Prince Abdullah.

Yassir Arafat became Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in 1969 and President of the Palestinian Authority in 1996. Increasingly frail of late, rumours began in 1997, denied by Palestinian officials, that he is suffering from Parkinson's disease. The 69-year-old Mr Arafat has never groomed a successor.

The Syrian leader has ruled since he took power in a 1970 coup. Long the subject of health speculation, the 68-year-old Hafez al-Assad had been grooming his son Bassel as successor until he died in a car crash in 1994. His other son, Bashar, has a role in affairs of state.

Saddam, 61, came to power in July 1979, succeeding the sick Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr. Still in power despite disastrous wars — against Iran from 1980 to 1988, and the US and Allied Forces in Kuwait and southern Iraq in 1991. America and Britain have made increasingly clear their determination to bring about his overthrow. But there is no obvious successor and many fear there could be civil war if he goes.

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The following schedule is being carried out as a result of the above-mentioned information. The following is a list of the names of the persons who are being investigated, and the names of the persons who are being investigated, and the names of the persons who are being investigated.

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MEN'S FASHION 1999-2000

Menswear: shaken.

Designers are giving the traditional male look a new twist. Roger Tredre reports. Photographs by Chris Moore



Yves Saint Laurent: lean-cut black tuxedo over a sequined shirt

The fashion world can be a rough, tough place. You see some shocking sights on the catwalk. But after several years in the front line, I thought nothing could hurt me. I was wrong. The American woman sitting next to me went pale. She leant over and hissed in my ear: "If my husband wore something like that, I would divorce him."

Before us strode a young man dressed in a tight, black stretch suit, over which he appeared to be wearing a small tent — but with the tent poles still attached, so his arms were pinned back, unable to move freely. It was, we agreed, the stuff of nightmares.

These sorts of clothes give designer fashion a bad name. Thankfully, the tent (from Walter Van Beirendonck) proved to be an unfair representation of current trends in men's fashion, as shown on the autumn-winter 1999-2000 catwalks. For the most part, designers are working hard to produce sensible clothes. For every silly idea, there are a dozen perfectly reasonable ones.

Indeed, in the week that Simpson's of Piccadilly — a purveyor of traditional British tailoring — was closing its doors, Paul Smith was doing his best to keep tradition alive: tweed suits and flannel shirts, cashmere coats and cavalry-twill trousers, hand-embroidered shirts and top-stitching on jackets. And not a tent pole in sight.

In essence, these clothes were not so distant from the kind of clothes sold by Simpson's. The difference lay in the fabrics — drill shirts washed soft, jackets in superfine flannels — and the details: mismatching buttons, multicoloured linings. Paul Smith shakes up the classic British male wardrobe, which is why he is our most successful designer.

Smith, who shows twice a year on the catwalk in Paris, summed up the theme of his new collection in one word: individuality. To make the point, he had thrown into the show a selection of second-hand clothes, including a knitted waistcoat found in a thrift shop. "Our lives are so full of technology these days — faxes and mobile phones and e-mails," said Smith. "I wanted to make an individualistic statement, with lots of hand-made and hand-embroidered touches. Never mind the technology. We're still human beings."

Despite a great deal of interest in so-called synthetic-based "technical" fabrics in recent seasons, designers are rediscovering the traditional virtues of tailoring and lux-

ry fabrics. Millennial fashion will be reassuringly familiar: *la mode masculine* is not suddenly going to lift off into intergalactic spacewear.

There was a real sense of occasion running through the men's shows. Here were the collections which take us through to the year 2000. In keeping with the spirit of the occasion, every designer had a go at producing the perfect outfit for New Year's Eve. The best, by far, came from Yves Saint Laurent in the form of a lean-cut black tux-

edo worn over a nulle shirt sprinkled with sequins. Camp, but so cool.

After this winter's plethora of grey, there's a lot of black on the way for next. In Milan, the designers at least threw in bright accents of colour on knitwear and shirts: tomato red, orange, yellow. But at London Men's Fashion Week, I sat through three shows in a row dominated by black. Men look good in black, but we could have done with some light relief.

Here's a run-through of the key

names in European men's fashion. In Italy, all the attention remains focused on Prada and Gucci, which stand at opposite ends of the fashion spectrum. Prada, with its functional anoraks and casual jackets, is a universe apart from flower-power Gucci, all velvet jackets and floral-embroidered jeans.

In Paris, the dominant forces are Paul Smith, Belgium's romantic Dries Van Noten, and Yves Saint Laurent, undergoing a menswear renaissance under the direction of the young designer Hedi Slimane.

In London, John Richmond and John Rocha are the biggest names on the catwalk. Both made a strong impact at the fledgling London Men's Fashion Week with restrained and wearable collections. Richmond mixing traditional tweeds and herringbones with funnel-neck jumpers and simple sports shapes, Rocha adding touches of fake fur to coats.

The new menswear is exceptionally comfortable and practical. There's a free-and-easy spirit in the air, with sportswear influences mixed with more formal dressing. This was most marked at Giorgio Armani, who has caught the sports bug in a big way and is shortly to launch a new Giorgio Armani Sport label. But all the big fashion houses are also joining in. How about a pair of Hermes trousers with a drawstring waist? Or an Yves Saint Laurent jumpsuit?

Everything comes with pockets: bellows pockets on jackets from Paul Smith; deep back pockets on trousers from Burro, a young British label; big, high pockets on shirts from Belgium's Dries Van Noten. They must be making room for all the mobile phones which bleated throughout every show. Or the portable CD players that everyone carried on the Eurostar.

In this ever-so-practical dawn of the millennium, designers also produced plenty of shoulder and hip bags, following the lead of Prada, which started the trend. The best of the rest were shown off the catwalk, notably from Mandarina Duck, a Bologna-based name, which came up with strap-on bags that curve across the front of the body. With perfect timing, Samsonite — a company best known for suitcases — also launched its first clothing collection, including blousons com-



Prada: shoulder bags and a functional look

plete with travel clocks, and padded jackets with built-in pillows.

Catching the all-purpose mood, designers made clothes that were super-versatile. At Louis Vuitton, Marc Jacobs produced tubular cashmere jumpers with detachable roll-necks. The innovative Dutch designer Alexander van Slobbe, whose label is called So, showed reversible jackets, smart and tailored on one side, shapely and casual on the other. Neil Barrett, former designer at Prada, showing his first solo collection, worked in padding for jumpers to accentuate the chest — which means that none of us needs bother going to the gym.

By the end of last week, my American colleague was much happier. With the exception of the tented suit, she — and I — had emerged from the trenches unscathed.



Armani: sportswear mixed with more formal dressing

Making up to Miss Moss

GIVEN that I'd only stunk in to do an interview, it was a little disconcerting to have a make-up artist (especially one who was responsible for the luminous Kate Moss cover of British Vogue last summer) leap up at me brandishing pots of concealer.

I'd like to believe that Sharon Dowsett, the make-up artist in question, was so excited about the new wonder product she had discovered that she wanted to try it out on everyone, and that it had nothing to do with my skin being so grey that I looked consumptive.

Anyway, since the transformation was so rapid and effective, I thought the least I could do was to share the secret. Lancôme's Palette Mix (subtitled: complexion kit and unleashed on the public on February 15) is a compact of three colours, dark, medium and a pale highlighter, which can be applied over moisturiser to the bits of your face that need them, thereby obviating the need for foundation, which, as any casual observer of beauty trends knows, is over, sweetie.

Dowsett used a tiny smearing of the medium shade under my eyes and round the base of my nose, the highlighter in the corners of my eyes, and the darkest shade to contour under my cheeks.

Four minutes later, not quite Miss Moss but no longer consumptive. So there you have it, invest £15, blend well and fret not that you didn't make it to the Caribbean this winter. Unfortunately, the make-up artist isn't included.

FROM the start, Wallpaper magazine has had a committed, if select, readership. This is glossy lifestyle with fully comprehensive attitude: Wallpaper readers are instructed on every aspect of their lives, from how to choose a stylish holiday to how to whip up a chic onion dip.

Now acolytes of the minimalist style magazine are taking turns to host Wallpaper parties which replicate the magazine's fashion shoots, incorporating every detail on the page, from that fabulous Clements Ribetto velvet top to the walnut and Lucite tables, from the Gucci ceramic bowl down to the menus of spicy fried pecans and goldfish putts. Naturally, the Wallpaper



staff are thrilled. "Hopefully," says an editorial team member, "they are being knowingly ironic rather than just sad."

In the Seventies these people would have been miming along to The Rocky Horror Show. From camp kitsch to camp design in 20 years. Who said the human race wasn't making progress?

"ARE injuries the season's must-have accessory, then?" inquired one fashion editor at the opening of Sotheby's art exhibition last Thursday. It's true that the doyenne of fashion



writers, Suzy Menkes, is still on crutches after an accident last autumn, and that the show's curator, Janice Blackburn, is nursing a wounded elbow. But notwithstanding the forests cut down last season to relay the news that Alexander McQueen had sent a model with prosthetic legs down his catwalk, self-maiming has still to gain what you might call mainstream currency.

What is chic, however, is adorning your injuries appropriately. The features editor of Harper's Bazaar set a sterling example when she

made a sling for her dislocated shoulder out of an old pashmina. Bandages just do come in the same colours.

TALKING of pashminas, know that certain inside have pronounced them cliché but I'm still attached to mine. So when I left one on Eurostar I got on to Lost Property. The was more taxing than you might think, as Eurostar on deals in recorded messages, outlined my pashmina's vit statistics (pale blue, cashmere and waited... and waited... for a response).

Eventually, François from Paris returned my call. The had found a blue shawl but was pashmina, not cashmere. "It's mine," I said. "Why didn't you say it was pashmina?" he asked. Because, I wanted to say, I didn't think everyone would know what pashmina was. "Well, you say it's your, but we'll need proof." Why? Lost Property tyrants go supercilious about fibre content, it's time to move on to something really recherché.

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MEN'S FASHION 1999-2000

not stirred



John Richmond: mixing the traditional with a modern, casual look

TRENDS

- **Colours** - muted, earthy tones, including shades of brown, tan, and olive green.
- **Patterns** - subtle, geometric patterns and textures, such as herringbone and tweed.
- **Suits** - relaxed, unstructured jackets and trousers, often in lighter shades.
- **Accessories** - simple, functional items like leather shoes and belts.



Paul Smith: shaking up the classic British male wardrobe but working hard to produce sensible clothes

SOLANGE AZAGURY-PARTRIDGE
Jewellery designer

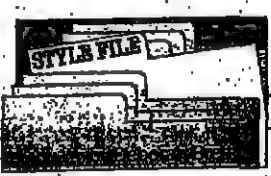
Describe your own personal style
It may look understated but it's actually quite luxurious and flashy.

What period in fashion do you love?
The Nineties. There are no rules, you simply wear what you want.

What accessory/piece of clothing can you not live without?
One of my rings. If I leave my house without one I feel totally bare.

What are your pet hates regarding fashion?
Being a victim and the continued love of the skinny.

What do you think of the



current fashion trends?
I love the bohemian, multi-cultural, ethnic look.

What is the most expensive/luxurious item you have ever bought?
My red Venetian chandelier.

What is your favourite shop?
The Cross in Notting Hill always has something to take my fancy.

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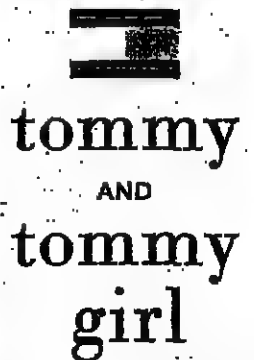
Gucci goes for flower power, John Richmond favours a more restrained approach

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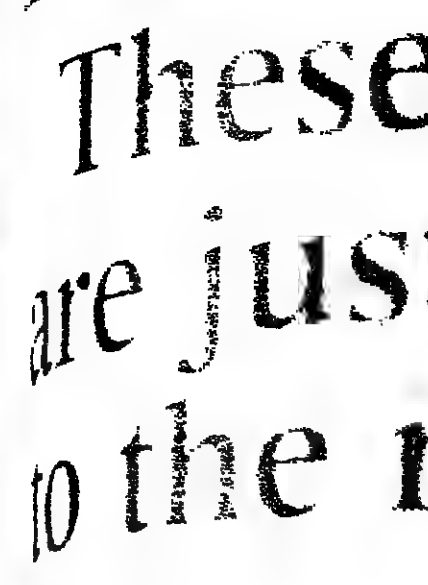
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man, who refuses to give any interviews, remains an enigma in Washington. "I don't know what the girl is like," says a friend, "but the girl is Irish looks, that led people to mistake her for Oliver North's daughter." When she defended him during the Iran-Contra affair, she was misleading.

Kevin Baine, a fellow partner at Williams & Connolly, says that she may look a little like Ally McBeal, but she is tougher than the TV lawyer. He calls her "the velvet hammer" because "she might seem kind and gentle soul but she can be a warrior when that is called for."

Friends say that Seligman, who is single and lives in a smart flat on Washington's "Embassy Row," is witty and delightful company. It is rumored that she has an on-off relationship with Eli Jacobs, a wealthy financier 20 years her senior and former owner of Baltimore Orioles baseball club, Fajimori, who that she has an "iron butt" because of the hours she spends at work.

George Stephanopoulos, Mr. Clinton's former aide, calls Seligman "a cool woman in every sense of the word." He also nicknamed her the President's secret weapon.

After her very public performances in recent weeks she, like Mills, can never be called "secret" again.

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These girls are just slaves to the rhythm

CABARET: Michael Owen tries to find out what castanets have got to do with Fascinating Aida's new West End show

Two flights up a darkened staircase in a complex of rehearsal rooms, and the only sound to be heard was the rhythmic drilling of a set of castanets. I was in search of the three women who make up Fascinating Aida, but seemed instead to have stumbled upon Paco Peña.

Through two well-hidden doors a brightly lit studio revealed itself and there, alone in her percussive contemplation, Miss Adele Anderson swirled and spun gracefully as her fingers rapped out a sensuous series of rava-rava rhythms.

So the first clue, as the trio reach the final stages of preparation for their West End return, appeared to be that sweet FA was hitting the flamenco trail. This turned out not to be the case, actually, but the expected and the unexpected are always swapping places when these three get together.

The studio began to fill up with the arrival of Dillie Keane, the founder of the group, and the third member, Issy van Randwyck, together with their pianist Sarah Travis and director Clarke Peters. This quintet have been locked together for a month now as they refine the new show, titled *Barefaced Chic*, that opens at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, tomorrow for a four-week season, followed by a three-month national tour.

It is two years since Fascinating Aida last played in London. Since then they have toured Australia and New Zealand, and made their long-awaited New York debut. They were no sooner home than they immediately started plotting *Barefaced Chic*, which will offer several new variations on the familiar Fascinating Aida formula. Not least Keane abandoning her onstage piano-playing to take a fuller role in the proceedings. The new production will be presented as a show-within-a-show, beginning with the girls caught backstage in silhouette behind a transparent screen. That, give or take a few crucial elements like a theatre, costumes and lights, was roughly the point they had arrived at in their studio session two floors up in a former Soho laundry.

The usual detritus of rehearsal rooms — water bottles, coffee cups and a vast assortment of shoes — littered the floor and benches as Peters — who has just quit his role as lawyer Billy Flynn in the musical *Chicago* to direct the girls — announced they were to run Act I. The cast looked at each other as though the moment they had been putting off had at last arrived, and a Chekhovian gloom momentarily fell upon

'I tell you, this show's going to be a lot sadder than anything Chekhov wrote'

the room. "I tell you, this show's going to be a lot sadder than anything Chekhov wrote," confided Keane with mock pessimism. She was, of course, entirely wrong. An hour later, the witnesses to this sneak preview were still damp-eyed from the wicked humour of their lyrics and the poignancy into which they can instantly switch. Those three-part harmonies, sometimes lilting, sometimes syncopated, now and again raunchy and rocking, seemed even more perfectly enmeshed.

The targets on the Fascinating Aida hitlist this year include *Viagra* — "We take a very positive view," says Keane — Jerry Springer, inspiring a catalogue of incestuous confessions, the literature of Carland, Cooper and Conan, chequebook journalism, and genetically modified food, which last song Anderson delivers as a rumble salute to the chemically enhanced beetroot that becomes a West End star.

Although all three have careers

outside Fascinating Aida — Van Randwyck in straight theatre, Anderson in jazz and Keane on radio — it is their joint enterprises that take precedence. "We are more than the sum of our parts," says Keane. "When we're together something organic happens. We grow as we go and, strangely, as we get older it seems to get easier rather than more difficult. But I might regret saying that."

They are even looking forward to life on tour, when they will travel the length and breadth of the land. "We love it," says Van Randwyck. "We climb in our blue Transit van, we always drive ourselves and we route the journey according to our favourite restaurants."

The New York debut last year won them a glowing set of reviews and a celebrity audience including Stephen Sondheim, Mike Nichols and Patti LaPave, who paid them the compliment of promptly drafting two of their songs into her own show.

Any nerves over such an important first night were dispelled in a haze of jet lag. "We flew from New Zealand to New York and went through so many time zones it was like Groundhog Day," says Keane. And Van Randwyck gives an insight into the thoroughness with which they research their material: "The first thing we did was go to the hairdresser to get our roots done, and that's where we picked up all the local gossip, which we immediately put in the show."

They found Australia less hospitable, Keane admits. "We'd been there ten years ago and enjoyed it but something's happened. They seem to have lost their national sense of humour. We arrived in Canberra when the Republican convention was on, which was not brilliant timing. They were all all things English, couldn't wait to get rid of the Queen and if we mentioned the monarchy or did anything politically incorrect, they just sat there and groaned. New Zealand was more



Fascinating Aida, aka (clockwise from left) Issy van Randwyck, Adele Anderson and Dillie Keane

fun. We did our version of the haka and told them what we had in mind for Jonah Lomu." Peters, who scored his own cabaret-style hit when he created *Five Guys Named Moe*, is directing them for the first time. "I believe this show is a departure for them, in terms of

the way it is set, and I think they are very brave. We've had no differences of opinion; if something needs to be worked out, I ask them to look at it in an acting rather than a musical context."

When I left them, the sound of castanets followed me down the stairs. I

crept back to see exactly what was going on. This time it was Van Randwyck snapping out the clacking Spanish beat — but then the door swung firmly closed. Tomorrow, all will be revealed.

● *Barefaced Chic* is at the Haymarket (0171-930 8899) from tomorrow.

The real hip hop mother

IN THE week that her face graced the covers of both *Time* and *Rolling Stone* magazines, Lauryn Hill chose Brixton as the location of the only European show on her current world tour. Hill has played in Britain before, as one third of the Fugees, but this was her first solo show here, and one of her first live appearances anywhere since her album, *The Miseducation Of Lauryn Hill*, elevated her to superstar status.

Still only 23, Hill is being hailed as the saviour and social conscience of hip hop, seemingly the one person who can keep the music "real" while actively rejecting the themes of violent aggression, misogyny and materialism with which the genre is now routinely blighted.

But if she was feeling the pressure she certainly didn't show it as she led a troupe of musicians, DJs, rappers and backing singers through a show that cleverly combined the spiritual with the sensual.

POP

**Lauryn Hill
Brixton**

Starting at a measured pace with her current single, *Ex-Factor*, she gradually upped the ante with a searing version of *Superstar*, followed by a perfectly judged trip down memory lane with the Fugees' theme *Fu-Gee-La* that sent the cheer-fest crowd into raptures.

After a rambling sequence of fun and games she pulled the show back into focus with an emotionally charged performance of *To Zion*, a song dedicated to her son. But if she treated the word "mother" with greater respect than her gangsta-rap peers do, there was nothing complacent about her accusatory wordplay in *Doo Wop (That Thing)* or *Lost Ones*. "You gained the whole world for the price of your soul... Wisdom is better than silver or gold," she snapped.

An encore of *Killing Me Softly* and *Everything Is Everything* provided a suitably upbeat finale to a show which straddled the divide between the street and the moral high ground as if the two had never drifted apart in the first place.

DAVID SINCLAIR

Violent — but fair

When Irvine Welsh's grim play premiered in Leeds a year ago many of my colleagues found themselves much agitated by the sight of (simulated) anal rape inflicted upon a captive chained and gagged inside a cage. The verbal abuse was condemned, as was some duff characterisation. Not a good evening, was the general opinion.

Welsh is said to have reworked the piece since then, and certainly the solitary woman in the cast has managed to become at least two-dimensional. But as the plot got under way and I adjusted myself to the sight of Tam Dean Burn's psychopathic homosexual baldie capering like Rumpelstiltskin around his victim, my surprised discovery was that the play so far was not bad.

THEATRE
*You'll Have to
Tolerate Me*
Asylum, WC2

Two novice hardmen have messily killed a third; to young Dex "it's a job", but the victim's death throes have haunted his accomplice, Docksey (Kenneth Bryans), until he feels compelled to trap Dex into explaining how he can remain so unaffected. Docksey's mad mate Jinks, the baldie, will squirm this revelation out of his prisoner, while Docksey revenges himself by sleeping with Dex's girl.

Now there is much in this sequence of events that is seriously flawed. How come the two

captors became mates? Why is sexual abuse expected to bring a confession? Welsh also cross-cuts from the underground torture chamber to the scenes with the girl (Kirsty Mitchell), but largely fails to motivate these interruptions.

Directed by Ian Brown on a central arena where the lighting focuses in turn upon the cage and the girl's sofa bed, the two sex scenes coincide so that Docksey's cries with the girl relate to what Jinks is doing to her former boyfriend. Welsh's use of hypo needles at the end is similarly ingenious, although he cannot prevent us finally feeling more sympathy for Dex — a strong performance of pent-up fury by James Cunningham — than for anyone else.

JEREMY KINGSTON

PLUTO Productions' double bill of seldom-seen Strindberg and exotic Cocteau offers two psychological studies of wronged women. In Strindberg's *The Stronger* Mrs X discovers during afternoon tea that Miss Y has been having an affair with her husband. No, I haven't lost the programme. Strindberg has stripped away all unnecessary distractions.

Miss Y is silent throughout: the play throws the spotlight on the older woman's struggle to divine the truth, about herself and her marriage as well as her friend's betrayal. Casting about for the right response, first she taunts, then wonders if it was all her fault, then weakly declares she can learn from the experience. It's a curious blend of naturalism and expressionism.

Emile, the stop-out husband in Cocteau's *The Sound of Silence*, is similarly voiceless. His outwardly poised wife is going crazy cooped up

No answer to this

**The Stronger/The
Sound of Silence**
Grace, SW11

in her hotel room night after night, waiting for him to come home from his mistress. When he finally does, she lets rip, only to find that he has fallen asleep.

Despite taking the form of two voluble monologues, these plays are just as much about silence as words, which prove to be more or less wasted.

When the husband simply

gets up and leaves, all his wife's protestations collapse into a humiliated wheedling plea for forgiveness. And although Mrs X goes down all the verbal avenues that might reveal her misplaced pride, her rival for all her enigmatic silence, turns out the stronger.

Cocteau wrote *The Sound of Silence* as a showcase for Edith Piaf, and the Bulgarian actress Irina Diva, all vulnerable hauteur and flighty disdain, is certainly Piaf-esque. She gives a gossily intense performance which is, though, too mannered and monotone. Christina Greatrex as Mrs X turns with elegant ease from anger to anguish, although again it all sounds a bit pat.

The directors of both pieces could do with injecting some spontaneity into the two characters. But the pieces complement each other well, and their small subtleties suit the diminutive Grace space.

NIGEL CLIFF

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Her new jazz age: three of Shobana Jeyasingh's dancers demonstrate the choreographer's *Fine Frenzy*

Caught in a frenzy of change

Ten years after starting her company in 1989, Shobana Jeyasingh is marking her anniversary with a new double bill which revisits her past and points the way towards her future. This revealing, if not wholly satisfying, package reminds us how far she has come as a choreographer, how startling and utterly transfixing her dances can be. Yet it also shows that she has reached the point where the rules she herself set out will have to be broken.

The double bill, premiered at the Gardner Arts Centre in Brighton on Thursday, opens with *Memory and Other Props*, a work which incorporates elements from a decade of dances but reimagines them with the benefit of hindsight and experience to create a

DANCE
*Shobana Jeyasingh
Brighton*

wholly original new piece. Thus, the meticulous rhythmic purity of her early choreography, based on the classical Indian dance form of *bharata natyam*, is viewed through the more liberating sensuality and lyricism of her later work.

Jeyasingh looks back on her career with evident fondness and tranquility, although she does allow fleeting, disquieting memories to disturb her meditation. Her six female dancers perform in a shadowy world, ideas half-formed and fuzzy like memory itself. The

piece doesn't quite hold together on its own terms, but if you have been following Jeyasingh from the beginning it offers fascinating insight into her brilliant choreographic intellect.

The future is represented by *Fine Frenzy*, which comes with the avant-garde jazzman Django Bates. Combining writing for the saxophone (played live by the Apollo Quartet) with taped sounds (traffic noise, church bells, shortwave transmissions and a child reading), Bates draws on the bustle of congested urban life to produce an unpredictable and stimulating score of great pace and atmosphere. Jeyasingh responds with choreography that draws on the same frenzy, animating her women in movement so agitated and il-

logical it doesn't know which way to turn. Athletic, muscular, introspective and rebellious, this is Jeyasingh as you have never seen her before.

Yet *Fine Frenzy* ultimately fails to prove its point because what the choreography wants and what the *bharata natyam*-trained female dancers can deliver are two different things. Jeyasingh is clearly champing at the bit to take full advantage of everything contemporary dance can offer (including a more varied technique and the added dynamic of male dancers), but that would mean drastic changes to her company. If the next ten years are to be as successful as the first ten, Jeyasingh has some hard choices to make.

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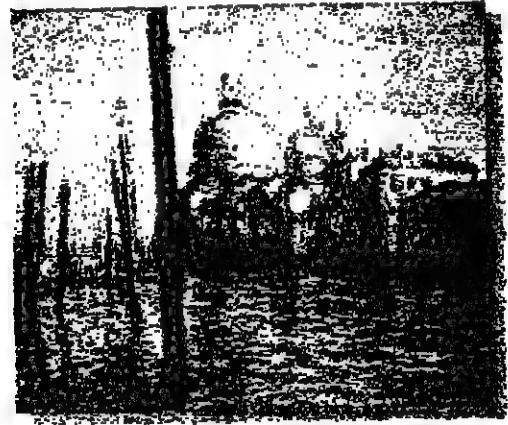
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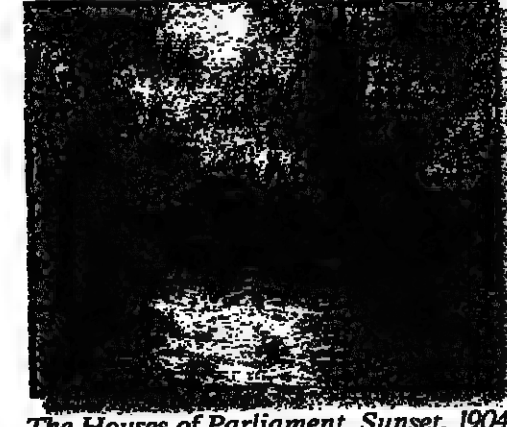
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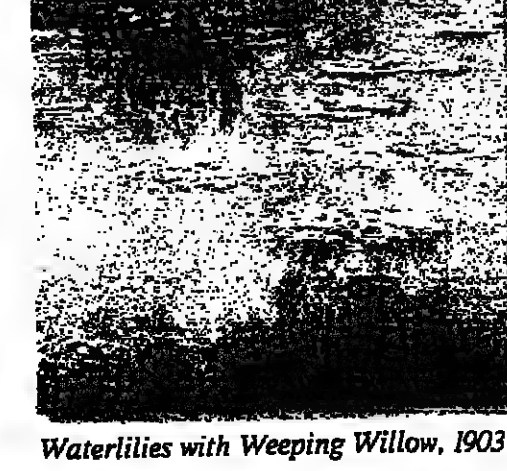
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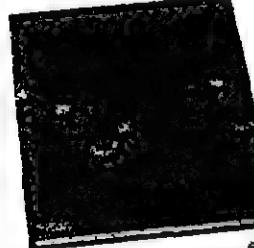


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CHANGING TIMES

ARTS

Strauss with a twist

Chailly's Dutch delight

A vibrant rose, but thorny

RODNEY MILNES

A high-contrast, black and white photograph of a man and a woman in a room. The man is reclining on a large, light-colored sofa, looking upwards. The woman stands to his left, looking towards the camera. A small table with a teapot and cups is visible in the foreground on the right. The background features a dark, arched doorway and a patterned curtain.

Joan Rodgers as a melancholy Marschallin and Stella Doufexis as Octavian in David McVicar's tough, provocative reading of *Der Rosenkavalier*

Up and down the scale

JOHN ALLISON

Blend us your eras

The soloist in the Brahms Violin Concerto was Vadim Repin, trailed somewhat hyperbolically as "the foremost young violinist to have emerged from Russia since the days of Heifetz, Milstein and David Oistrakh". Quite where that leaves Maxim Vengerov is not clear, but if it

Those qualities characterised the Second Symphony too: finely honed strings, lustrous winds and well-behaved, ideally balanced brass all contributed to a satisfying sonic experience first and a cogent interpretation second. But how shameful that London has only acoustically challenged halls to offer such distinguished visitors.

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Don't tell, but this is a revolution

The profound implications of devolution cannot be evaded

Within a decade, the way we are governed could have changed dramatically. Powerful First or Chief Ministers in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast (and possibly regional leaders in Newcastle and Birmingham), together with elected mayors in big cities, could be challenging the dominance of London. The party system could have fragmented where there is devolution, and nationally if the electoral system is reformed. Judges will be ruling on the decisions of ministers and Parliament and on disputes with new devolved bodies. Whitehall and Westminster will have to change radically in response.

This is not the blueprint of a Charter 88-Democratic Audit champion of radical reform, nor the nightmare of a Tory opponent, but the sober assessment of what might happen by the non-partisan analysis of the *Constitutional Futures* Unit in their new book, *Constitutional Futures, A History of the Next Ten Years*, edited by Robert Hazell, its director. Written much more like a Civil Service brief than a polemic, the book exposes the curious ambivalence, and often evasiveness, of the Government's approach.

Constitutional reform is by far the most radical of all new Labour's programmes, and absorbs the most parliamentary time. But you would hardly guess so from listening to most ministers, and not at all from Tony Blair, since he has not made a single speech on the issue as Prime Minister, aside from campaigning trips to Scotland and Wales. Even the two senior ministers most closely involved, Derry Irvine and Jack Straw, veer between pride and caution over what they are doing. In a lecture



Peter Riddell

before Christmas, Lord Irvine of Lairg presented the changes as incremental: "We are not hunting the chimera of constitutional masterplans, nor ultimate outcomes. We prefer the empirical political genius of our nation: to go, pragmatically, step by step, for change through continuing consent." There is a strong case for incrementalism, not just as the British way of legislating but also as a political tactic. Past attempts to reform the House of Lords have largely failed because governments tried to do too much in one go. Removing hereditary peers has been blocked because of disagreement over what and who should replace them. Previous radical governments have seldom had a clear masterplan from the start. The Thatcher administrations' proposals on privatisation, trade unions, and tax reform were produced step-by-step over nearly a decade.

The more pertinent criticism is that the Government is minimising the implications of its programme, and the many loose ends. This is again partly a political tactic not to worry MPs. Admittedly, the Government's terms of reference for the Royal Commission on the Lords do suggest that a reformed second chamber could link the separate strands of reform. Devolution is often treated as if it just concerns the Scots and Welsh, but life in Whitehall and Westminster

will change considerably. The machinery of government will have to be reorganised for negotiations with the devolved bodies. The separate Secretaries for Scotland, Wales, and, in time, Northern Ireland will probably disappear, but no one is willing to say that now.

Similarly, there are bound to be arguments over money, as in other federal systems such as Australia and Canada, especially since the Treasury will be providing a least 97 per cent of the money for Scotland and 100 per cent for Wales and Northern Ireland. At present, Scotland is one of the most prosperous parts of Britain but receives most per head in public spending on the mainland from the 20-year-old Barnett formula which allocates increases in expenditure. Labour naturally does not want to reopen the question now, and Gordon Brown was not pleased when the Treasury Committee of the Commons recommended a review to link spending and needs more closely. But the debate will not go away.

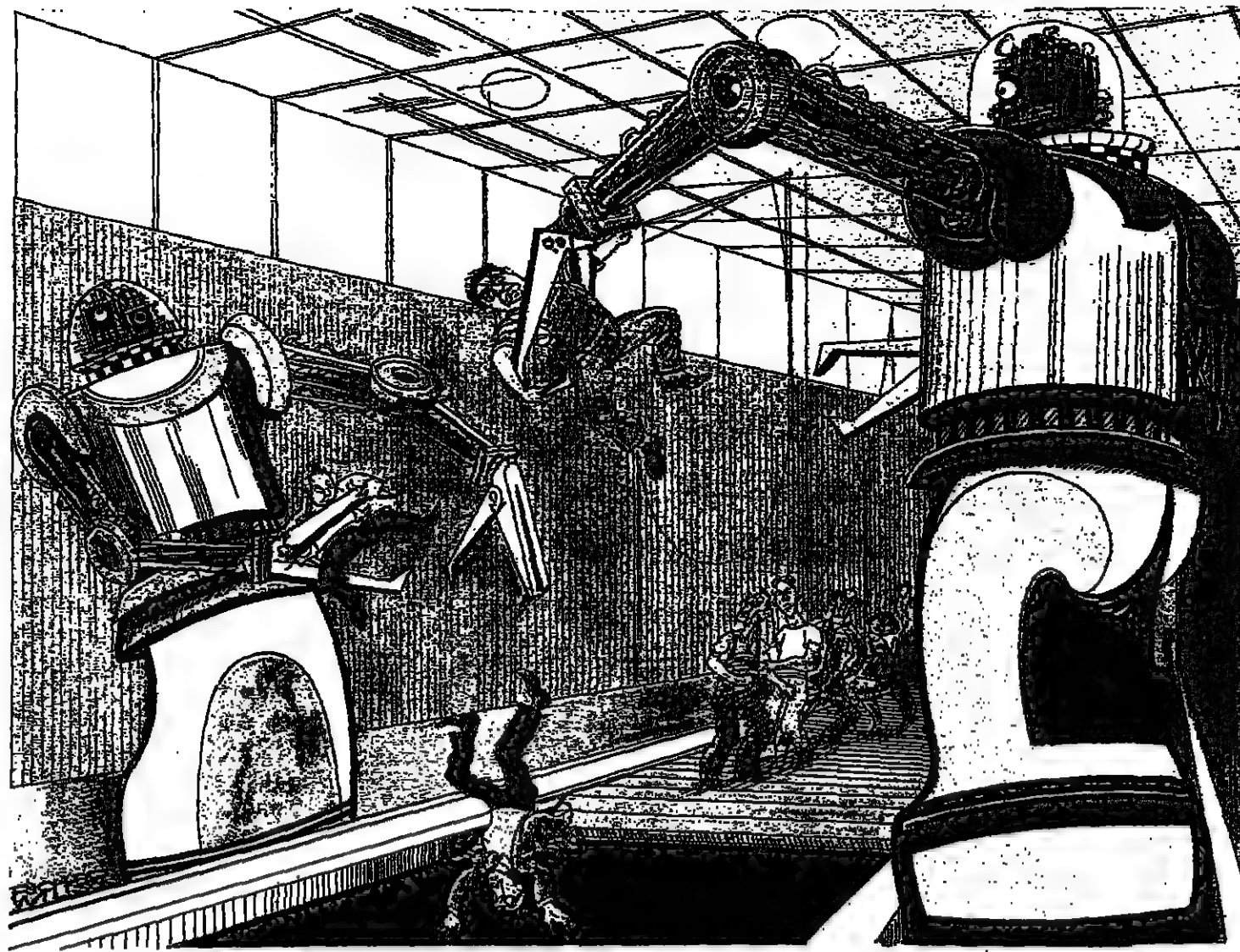
Westminster has also only just started examining its response to devolution. Any immediate changes look like being minimal — reducing the time given to Scottish and Welsh Questions and setting up an English Committee. That will not be enough to meet the concerns of English MPs. As is recognised in *Constitutional Futures*, there is unlikely to be a common federal structure of devolution throughout Britain. But demands will increase for greater decentralisation, via elected regional assemblies in the North East and mayors in big cities.

These various changes will increase pressures on the senior judiciary. The greater public exposure of the Pinochet case is only a forerunner of what will come when judges have to adjudicate on devolution and human rights disputes. That, in turn, will raise questions about whether the law lords should continue to sit and vote in the second chamber or whether we should have a separate Supreme Court, though without the powers of the American version.

The book explores both mini and maxi scenarios of what might happen, and there are contradictions in the Government's attitude. The new Labour leadership in London has so far been reluctant to surrender either financial or political control and has in some areas been as centralist as its predecessors. But even on the cautious mini assumption, Professor Hazell argues that "the cumulative impact will be profound, because the constitutional reforms already set in train will unleash a political and legal dynamic which the Government will not be able to rein back".

The Times will be sponsoring a one-day conference on February 25 on Constitutional Futures: Where is the Government's constitutional reform programme taking us? Fee £175, academics £80, OAPs/charities £60, students £40. Details: 0171-504 4992, fax 0171-504 4993.

peter.riddell@the-times.co.uk



Rover is going nowhere

Sooner or later Longbridge will probably close — and we will realise that Europe cannot save us

It came as no surprise that Bernd Pischetsrieder had to resign on Friday at the Munich board meeting of BMW. He was both the executive chairman of BMW and the architect of the policy of purchasing and trying to rebuild Rover. This policy was a disastrous failure, as his rival and second-in-command, Wolfgang Reitzle, had said it would be.

In financial terms, the acquisition of Rover cost more than £800 million, the subsequent investment was over £2 billion and the current losses are about £360 million. To invest £3 billion in order to create a loss of £360 million is enough to get any chief executive the sack. All the more so, because the immediate outlook for Rover is one of rising losses as world demand for cars continues to decline: there is also a need for further massive investment. The Pischetsrieder policy has totally failed.

The surprise is that the BMW board did not turn to Reitzle. From a British perspective it is easy to see the Anglophile Pischetsrieder as a Cavalier, "romantic but wrong", and the harder minded Reitzle as a Roundhead, "repulsive but right". If the Pischetsrieder strategy was a disaster, should BMW not have switched to the Reitzle strategy? The board decided not to do so. To understand that decision one needs to look back to BMW's problem as it would seem in 1994 when the decision to acquire Rover was taken. That proved a disastrous decision, but there were arguments for it.

At that time BMW was, as it still is, a very successful brand, at the upper end of the market, with sales of about 600,000 units a year and wide profit margins. The strategic studies which were being made, both for BMW and for other major producers, all suggested that global competition was going to erode the advantages of BMW and of the other companies, such as Volvo or Jaguar, which were based on relatively narrow brands. BMW would either have to accept a takeover by one of the larger international companies, which included Daimler-Benz, General Motors, Ford and Fiat, or try to build itself into an international company of approximately their size. The policy of remaining a niche brand would lead to declining profit margins and loss of value for the shareholders, including the Quandt family, which has effective control.

The purchase of Rover was an attempt to build BMW into a fully

competitive global car company. They went for big, they nearly went for broke.

This strategic analysis has been confirmed by the mergers which have happened since. Individual brands, even very good ones, are not surviving as independent companies. The Reitzle policy was to reinforce the BMW brand with the best of Rover — Land Rover, Mini and MG. The BMW board did not

with his big-company strategy, and Reitzle with his niche-brands strategy, no other strategy was left; an independent future for BMW became a muddle or a bluff.

This looks to be any other temporary postponement of the closure of Rover's Longbridge plant. That, when it comes, will be a heavy blow to the local economy. It will lead to the closure of many local suppliers, and to loss of profits beyond them. Longbridge has been a low productivity plant for many decades. It has "been seen as an industrial problem for at least 35 years. Productivity is only about a third of the best and half the average in British car plants."

People do not like losing their jobs. When there are large redundancies, a main board always seems remote, and its decisions seem arbitrary. This is worse when the company is an international one, since its decisions can always be suspect as having been biased in favour of the home country. Anglo-German relations are not as bad as they are sometimes thought to be, but it is probably more prejudicial for a German company to shut down a British plant than for a Dutch or American company to do the same thing for the same reasons. Quite possibly Longbridge will eventually be closed by Ford or General Motors, as part of a review of the BMW plants after an American takeover. In public relations terms that might be easier.

The political lesson is not that a distant board in Munich is destroying Birmingham jobs, though the Reitzle plan would have done that, but that the European connection cannot insulate British industry from the impact of the global market. The reason that Longbridge may have to close is that global car production capacity in 1999 is about 50 per cent higher than expected



William Rees-Mogg

sales; it is probably still increasing faster than sales. Longbridge is a low-productivity plant in a period of world overcapacity. The Rover issue shows that Britain has to meet global competition whether we are integrated into Europe or not. BMW cannot protect a plant that is surplus to global needs: it cannot protect itself. If Longbridge does close, that will be an important political event; it will demonstrate to the British people one of the limitations of European power. Yet it will not answer this question: will British business meet global competition better if we are wholly integrated into the European economy? Or will the flexibility of independence help Britain to be more effective as a competitor?

A lot of people have lost confidence in the virtues of independence — the CBI, the TUC, the Lord Mayor of London, many senior civil servants, the Government, most of the law lords the larger part of the Establishment. They take the view that integrated membership of a large regional bloc is the best way to meet world competition. They are regionalist, not globalist. They are also defeatist.

At the argument the other way seems much stronger. Competitiveness depends on costs: continental Europe is the world's highest cost zone, in terms of wages, taxes, hours of work, government expenditure and regulation. In all of these factors of competitiveness, Europe is more vulnerable than Britain. We also have the advantage of a market currency, whereas the euro imposes a single currency on economies with very different competitive abilities. Our own exchange-rate crisis in 1993, and the Asian currency disasters since 1997, demonstrate the danger of fixed exchange rates which get out of line with global market realities. Rover proves Europe cannot save us; it is the euro which could actually sink us.

My personal sympathies are with Wolfgang Reitzle. At the Munich board meeting he was right. I think that BMW, without Rover, could have prospered as a brand, and Land Rover would surely have strengthened it. But that merely proves that I believe in independence rather than mere bulk. In nature, in the car industry, in world competition, in nations, elephantiasis is not the best route to survival.

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Down market

SMALL-TOWN England is about to press flesh with Monica Lewinsky. The world's most visible intern is to carry out a book-signing tour for a chain of provincial bookshops. Fresh from presenting her evidence to the Senate, Lewinsky will inscribe copies of Andrew Morton's "tell all" biography at four branches of County Bookshops — a ditty little company which works out of such places as Gateshead, Hull and Rochdale. While her access to the White House is now limited, I gather the British Embassy in Washington has been rather more helpful about visas.

The shop will excitedly cry: "Your daughter's daughters will adore you for purchasing this appreciating asset." Come, gentlemen, don't be unchivalrous about her fondness for hamburgers.

● GWYNETH PALTROW thinks Shakespeare was a bit of an all-rounder. The actress, pictured, who plays his paramour in *Shakespeare in Love*, is sure the plotline is credible — except, like other eminent "Dark Lady" scholars, she believes her character, Viola, would have been a boy. "Everybody was very open with their sexuality then and it wasn't weird for people of the same sex to be together."



● JEREMY PAXMAN has his doubts about William Hague. The Newsnight presenter, whose latest book, *The English*, sits happily in the bestseller lists, mocks the Tory leader's recent pronunciation. "To call the British 'brassy' was odd," he tells me. "We are actually a rather shy and private people."

Lording it

SECURITY for former Northern Ireland Secretaries is a tricky matter, but a couple of peers are perplexed. They note that while some recent Secretaries lack protection, a man who left the post 20 years ago still uses an armoured car and protection officers. Fellow peers are chippy at the sight of Lord Mason of Barmsey striding past tax queues. "I do find it funny that he still uses it," says Lord Prior. Another lord is sharper: "We all think he just likes to feel important." Surely, after Airey Neave's death, they are being a little ungenerous?

comment@the-times.co.uk

Lime cordials

REFUSENIKS at the BBC are having a knees-up. A party thrown by the corporation's finest, including Robert Harris, David Dimbleby and Sir Ludovic Kennedy, will mark the pre-Britain days by

DO YOU FIND LIBERAL DEMOCRATS CREDIBLE?



remembering Lime Grove Studios, the current affairs base closed by Sir John in 1990. Tomorrow's bash — putatively to mark the opening of a homeless hostel on the old site — will see the old gang sipping warm wine and watching out-takes.

"We were happy there," sniffles a BBC type. But will Sir John turn up? "He never actually worked there. He was, as he once said himself, from another planet."

● JACK STRAW has found a cunning way to win over that spirited backbench renegade, Bob Marshall-Andrews. He has asked Mrs Bob, Gill Marshall-Andrews, to advise him on gun control.

Sister act

RICHARD BRANSON is doing his bit for the sisters. Virgin Books will soon bring us *Sapphire*, a new imprint for lesbians. Billed as "the raunchiest lesbian imprint ever to hit the UK", it will be launched in May with the first book in the series, *Big Deal*. How apt.

JASPER GERARD

The point is to overwhelm the interlocutor, so that you emerge as the more Soviet, the more petty, the more steeped in unnecessary officialdom

If you want to get anything done in Russia, you have to know how to talk. Exactly how. Just chatting merrily away or being incredibly deferential won't work. A specific amount of time needs to be set aside in every undertaking for persuading people to do what they have already agreed to do both by telephone and by fax, what they know perfectly well they are going to do, what they may even actively want to do and what they are often legally obliged to do.

Newcomers can find this procedure tedious and obstructive, but as far as the initiators are concerned it is simply part of the deal, a vital part, without which no trip, round a factory, no application for a visa and no visit to any kind of official organisation would be complete.

Upon arrival almost anywhere, from the state Duma

building to the offices of a newspaper, the visitor is required to stand in a dim, dark, yellow entrance way, heated by vast scorching fans situated at either end, blowing in air so hot as to make breathing difficult.

The floor is likely to be inches deep in muddy water and, depending on the popularity of the organisation, the vestibule will be extremely crowded and sweaty, with grimy condensation dripping down the glass panels in the heavy, metal swing doors.

Here in the gloom there will be one cream-coloured plastic telephone made in 1952, sitting on a low, wooden table. The idea is that you take turns with the phone, calling the person whose name is scrawled on a chewing-gum wrapper in your purse, and that person will then come down, fill out a form, get you an entrance pass, lead you through

security and take you to see the object of your desire. Or not.

This is where the talking comes in. "Hello, I have an appointment to see Ivan Ivanovich Ivanov," you say, trying to keep a smile in your voice. There is a pause, during which the person at the other end of the line is almost certainly sighing, wondering whether or not you might be mad, and thinking it must be true for a teabreak, such has been the unprecedented number of prank callers this morning. "I don't see your name here. With whom did you make the appointment?" they will ask.

At this point you need to be prepared. The game is that you should win the argument by

means of your superior or rational. Also on your chewing-gum wrapper are the names of ten officials with whom you have communicated at length prior to your arrival. In brackets under their names you have written the names of their secretaries and the time at which you phoned to arrange the meeting for which you have now come.

The point is to overwhelm the interlocutor with more bureaucracy than she has at her fingertips, such that you emerge victorious as the more Soviet, the more petty, the more steeped in unnecessary officialdom.

Ideally the barrage of your entirely superfluous information will allow you to march unhindered into the building of choice and meet people at the very highest level (like, for example, the woman who puts the actual stamps on the visas). Often, however, you find you have moved too fast, laid all your aces on the table precipitately. This can irritate your minion and cause her to drag her feet, and call all the people on your sticky list demanding to know why she was not informed of your forthcoming visit (she was).

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Anna Blundy



comment@the-times.co.uk

ABDULLAH'S INHERITANCE

Iraq may prove the new King's most pressing policy problem

The scenes of desolation on the streets of Amman, the extraordinary tributes paid by other international figures, and the enormous number of world leaders who will assemble in Jordan today for his funeral, pays fitting tribute to the life and work of King Hussein. Although there was some confusion about his exact condition in the final days, the transition of power to Crown Prince, now King, Abdullah has proceeded as smoothly as could reasonably be expected in the difficult circumstances.

In the space of scarcely two weeks the new King has been asked to make the transition from soldier to monarch and statesman. He has handled that short period of time with considerable dignity. In the short term, he will benefit from the undoubted goodwill generated by his father's success in turning what was initially little more than a colonial convenience into a coherent country and people. The often turbulent nature of Middle East politics will soon test Abdullah's mettle.

It has been widely argued that the new King is an unknown and inexperienced individual. Neither assertion is entirely accurate. The objectives that Abdullah will set himself are relatively clear and follow strongly from those left by his father. He may be inexperienced now but others will soon be in that same situation. The rulers of Egypt, the Palestinian Authority, Saudi Arabia and Syria are all longstanding political figures with well publicised health problems. The vibrant nature of Israel's democracy means that political turnover in that state is always a possibility. Within a decade, King Abdullah may well be the most seasoned leader in the region.

The lengthy Israeli election campaign, and inevitable complexity in forming a coalition Cabinet thereafter, offers the King an opportunity to concentrate on domestic questions before then being obliged fully to

shape his foreign policy. Those matters at home are significant in themselves. They include the management of Jordan's move towards a limited form of democracy, an overdue crackdown on official corruption, and action to remedy a lethargic economy with substantial unemployment. This last aspect is of particular urgency. Average per capita income in Jordan is barely one fifth that of neighbouring Israel.

King Hussein knew that Jordan needed peace with, and extensive financial ties to, Israel if his country were ever to achieve prosperity. He pursued those links for that reason despite their domestic unpopularity. The cool response among many Jordanians to the presence of Binayim Netanyahu in Amman today is a visible reminder that some will surely seek to exploit such emotions. An effective peace process alone can render co-operation between Israel and Jordan politically plausible. Much will depend on two factors the King cannot control: whether Yasser Arafat declares a Palestinian state in May and the precise outcome of the Israeli ballot for Prime Minister and Knesset shortly after.

These events, though, might not prove the most troubling aspect of King Abdullah's inheritance. The machinations of Syria, although serious, could also prove containable. The succession struggle in Damascus once President Assad dies, between his son Bashar and others in the Alawi sect, may make recent feuds among the Hashemites appear ordered. The real danger could rest with a man who will definitely not be attending King Hussein's funeral. While Saddam Hussein still runs Iraq, Jordan will be caught between the United States and popular sentiment among much of its own population. King Abdullah must hope that the next new and inexperienced man in Middle East politics comes to power in Baghdad.

TO THE AID OF THE PARTY

The first Conservative policy paper is not encouraging

After so many months of silence, the first Conservative document to outline fresh approaches in a specific area of policy is welcome. The more pity, then, that the public thoughts of Gary Streeter, the Tory spokesman on international development, suggest that he has as much to learn about his subject as Clare Short. "Conservatives," he rather defensively begins, "have something new to say about International Development." But what is best in these proposals is not really new; and most of what is new is half-baked.

That is true even of the paper's most radical idea. It argues that "there may now be a *prima facie* case" for closing down the European Union's aid programme. This needed to be said out loud. For years, British ministers and their officials have been groaning in private that EU aid spending, a byword for waste, fraud and political manipulation, is a shocking waste of money. In public they have called for reform, but never asked Mr Streeter's question: "Why does the EU need an aid programme?" The EU, governments are agreed, should not do things that national governments can do better; and this is a clear case where it does them much worse.

But how would the Tories set about slaying this white elephant? Mr Streeter does not say. He seems to hope that Britain can get together with other governments, not to abolish EU aid spending but to trim it. Baroness Chalker of Wallasey, the most effective aid minister this country has had, could have told Mr Streeter that he is whistling in the wind, if only because France is protective of a programme that serves its goals in Francophone Africa.

Fresh thinking is not much use without thorough homework, which in this case would have to explore the legal scope for a British taxpayer revolt. And on UN development programmes, most of which

are so ill-run and ineffective as to be actually counter-productive, there is not a word. They too are a drain on British aid funds; in most cases, it would be a blow for UN reform to turn off the tap.

What of the Department for International Development (DFID) itself? The paper misses its chance to lay out a Tory strategy for encouraging wealth creation through liberating individual effort. That would do far more for the poor than Ms Short's unrealistic and misplaced crusade to "eliminate" absolute poverty. It is right to argue that the promotion of better government should be "the key objective" of aid. Nothing has shrunk the constituency in this country for helping poorer countries more than the sense that it enriches crooked politicians and bureaucrats.

Yet here again, Mr Streeter proves a shrinking violet, worthily wondering how to lay down conditions "without harming the poor". On debt relief, he seems not to realise that he is in the realm of truism when he says that the criterion should be a government's determination to reform, rather than the record of past performance.

Instead of delivering aid directly, the paper says that the DFID should become an "enabling authority". It makes sense for the DFID to encourage competitive bidding for contracts by the private sector, as well as voluntary agencies. But this should be done when, and because, it would offer poor countries better value for money. The purpose should not, in the paper's touchily language, be "empowering" aid agencies. Nor is it certain that the result will be "better co-ordination and less duplication": aid agencies are as notorious for squabbling over shares of development pie as any UN body. International aid is a natural candidate for true radicalism. This limp effort should have been shredded by William Hague before it saw daylight.

ERODING THE BEDROCK

The threat to suburbia should be taken seriously

Britain's net curtains are twitching. Urban decay, usually associated with the inner cities, is spreading into parts of suburbia. According to a report for the Civic Trust, the tree-lined avenues, synonymous with family life, face the danger of decline. Ministers should heed this warning. These communities, in which 60 per cent of the population live, cannot be allowed to crumble. Such a fate would again exacerbate the need for new houses. Instead, a more imaginative approach is required, to attract people into suburbia and lessen the constant pressure to build in the country.

The many attractions of suburban life have been battered by the winds of social change. Suburbs are, by their very nature, dependent on other urban areas. The need to commute and the rapid growth in car ownership has lessened social contact and demobilised Burke's "little platoons". Rather than shop in a high street, people are often lured into retail parks or out-of-town superstores. For young people, sedate suburbia, with its rows of identical houses and apparent culture of conformity, may appear to be no match for a pulsating city. Worse, the dependence of many suburban areas on one local employer has made them just as vulnerable as mining communities to economic forces. Yet, until now, their plight has rarely been acknowledged.

There is nothing inevitable about the erosion of the suburbs, nor would such an event be remotely desirable. These remain the communities in which most parents seek to raise their children. They are, as even George Orwell, an occasional critic, once aptly noted, Britain's secret bedrock.

Suburbia's fate cannot be disentangled from, indeed depends upon, the wider debate over housebuilding. The Government contends, on dubious grounds, that 4.4 million homes are needed by 2016 to accommodate the increase in single people, divorcees and elderly people. As an area the size of Newcastle upon Tyne needs to be built upon to meet the demands of the South East alone, the green belt is being loosened. An extra 10,000 acres of such land have been incorporated into development plans since the general election.

John Prescott, facing accusations that he is overseeing the destruction of the countryside, has ruled that 60 per cent of new homes should be built on "brown-field", urban sites. Suburbia's contribution must not be overlooked. Ministers should consider the report's innovative schemes to resuscitate suburban spirit and deter an exodus from Britain's Acacia Avenues. A suburban renaissance might offer novel means of tackling the need for new homes, and keep the net curtains twitching.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Cost of improving railway efficiency

From the Chief Executive of Railtrack

Sir, Your editorial, "Morton's fork" (February 4), is a mixture of the very right and the very wrong.

We entirely agree that the incentive framework set up in 1993, when there was no growth on the railway, is inappropriate for today's problems. It has delivered unprecedented growth in passenger and freight, increased investment in infrastructure and rolling stock, and a reduction in government subsidy. It has not delivered improvement in train performance.

Part of this is a function of the growth. Congestion models show that a 1 per cent increase in passenger train miles results in a 2.5 per cent increase in delays. Another cause is the incentive framework where some parts of the railway industry, as you point out, are incentivised more for growth than performance and other parts, including Railtrack, have insufficient incentive for enhancement investment.

I really cannot accept that the blame for all this should fall on Railtrack. We have reduced our delays by over 40 per cent in the last three years — we are now responsible for 45 per cent of all delays, compared with 65 per cent three years ago. This is a bigger increase in productivity than achieved in any other privatised utility. In terms of delays attributed to us we are running 4 per cent better this year than last year. In spite of a 7 per cent increase in passenger train miles.

Far from "barely starting" our investment programme, we have doubled our investment in the infrastructure to £1.45 billion this year — approximately four times our annual profit and around ten times the rate of depreciation. No other company in the FTSE 100 is investing so much in relation to its profits. We have a negative cashflow this year of over £500 million due to this programme. Moreover, by the end of next year we will have invested over £1 billion more in renewals than the Rail Regulator required us to invest when he set our access charges in 1994 — and he is proposing to allow no return on this investment.

The challenge of improving performance and maintaining the growth momentum without any changes to the incentive regimes is awesome. That is why, since the November summit, we and the train operators have adopted a more collaborative approach. You will hear of more progress on this at the February 25 summit with the Deputy Prime Minister.

The regulator, in his December 9 corporate finance determination, has challenged us to take more risk, challenge even more investment and raising the required finance. This is fundamental to getting the Government's Transport White Paper implemented. In our network management statement, to be published in March, you will see us responding to this challenge. Already last week we committed to a £165 million investment at Leeds and are letting contracts, without a guaranteed customer for the extra capacity.

This is the way forward. We are grasping the nettle.

Yours sincerely,
GERALD CORBETT,
Chief Executive, Railtrack plc,
Railtrack House,
Euston Square, NW1 2EE,
February 4.

From Mr John Stittle

Sir, Your front-page report today, headed "Trains getting later and later", is even more alarming when the nation's finances are considered. Since privatisation, not only are the UK's train services more unreliable but they are also costing the taxpayer dearly.

Massive state subsidies now support the so-called privatised passenger train operators. Until last year financial aid from the public purse was nearly double the subsidies received by the former state-owned British Rail. The passenger now receives a worse service at greater cost.

As you report, John Prescott, Deputy Prime Minister, is contractually unable to alter the 25 passenger franchises. However, he could legislate to impose far more onerous financial penalties on train operators whose punctuality and reliability targets fail to meet high standards.

Likewise, the track and signals owner, Railtrack, should have its own investment programme subject to far greater scrutiny. For too long it has provided for investment in its financial statements but has failed to spend, the cash.

The regulator must insist that the level of Railtrack's track access fees (payable by train operators) is related far more closely to standards of investment and operating performance. At present, penalties for failure are often a minor irritation. They must hurt the company.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN STITTLE
(Senior Lecturer,
Accountancy and Finance),
Anglia Business School,
Anglia University,
Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1LL.
j.stittle@anglia.ac.uk
February 4.

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Letters may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.
e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

Teachers' performance and pay

From Mr David Gladstone

Sir, With the greatest respect I can muster I have to say that your leading article today, "Professional pay", is misguided.

Every serious study to date has come to the same conclusion: performance-related pay (PRP) does not work, even in the private sector. However the system is structured, it always means rewarding the few at the perceived expense of the many, and such benefits as may result (which are anyway impossible to measure) from the enhanced motivation of the successful are more than offset by the demotivation of everyone else.

It is all too typical of the Treasury to have seized on an unproven business theory imported from America and turned it into a dogma. It has long been trying to impose PRP on reluctant public services, underpinned by the absence of any proof of its efficacy, fairness or overall cost-effectiveness.

There are two fundamental objections to PRP in the public sector, over and above those in the private. First, public servants are not principally motivated by money. Secondly, there is no reliable way of quantifying a public servant's output.

Your statement that it will cost "up to £1 billion" to implement the scheme only underlines this latter point. Not only will already overstressed head teachers have to waste hours working out ostensibly objective reasons for paying some of their staff more than others, but we are now to create an army of bureaucrats looking over their shoulders and wasting more of everyone's time and money.

If a billion pounds really are suddenly available, it would be far more effective to distribute the money to the schools, to spend as they and the governors see fit.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID GLADSTONE,
1 Mountfort Terrace, N1 1JJ,
February 2.

Healthcare rationing

From the Chief Executive of the Christie Hospital NHS Trust

Sir, Your leading article of January 22, "The potent taxpayer", properly draws attention to the long overdue need for a wider debate on healthcare rationing and the NHS. However, you underestimate the extent to which rationing currently takes place.

In addition to the "postcode prescribing" limitations you refer to, many entire services are fast disappearing from the NHS. Examples would include adult dentistry, assisted conception, much middle-class minor trauma and its resulting physiotherapy.

This has not shaken the NHS to its foundations but is simply a con-

From the General Secretary of NASUWT

Sir, The performance management model put forward in the Government's technical paper on the future of the teaching profession is hopelessly over-bureaucratic and totally unmanageable.

NASUWT has advocated a constructive alternative. This is to link pay to a fair, sensible, streamlined, non-bureaucratic system of appraisal, based on judging the qualities teachers bring to their work. Unlike the government proposals, this model would achieve the aims you rightly support in your leading article of making "the profession like any other one where hard work, dedication and motivation are rewarded with promotion and remuneration".

The Government is ill-briefed in claiming in its recent Green Paper, *Meeting the Challenge of Change*, that teachers have set themselves more strongly against performance-related pay than most other professions. I know of no other profession that employs PRP on any significant scale.

Most teacher unions reacted positively to the Green Paper. The technical paper is now alienating those of us who were keen to respond positively and build a better future for teachers.

While you may wish to attack those who are already calling for industrial action, you should not be lulled into a false belief that there is not a huge groundswell of antipathy towards the Government welling up in the teaching profession.

I regard the proposals as entirely inappropriate, woefully unmanageable and monstrously bureaucratic. They would hinder and not promote effective teaching.

Yours faithfully,
NIGEL de GRUCHY,
General Secretary, NASUWT,
5 King Street,
Covent Garden, WC2E 8HN,
February 3.

summer-driven response to limitation in public provision. This movement needs to be accelerated to permit vital investment in services for genuinely life-threatening conditions — which must always remain the responsibility of the State.

The notion that every NHS deficiency can simply be resolved by yet more funding needs to be exposed as naive and fanciful.

No economy could ever keep pace with its population's desire for health-related services, and no government will ever be so foolish as to try.

Yours faithfully,
MIKE FRY,
Chief Executive, Christie Hospital
National Health Service Trust,
Wilmslow Road, Withington,
Manchester M20 4BX,
January 29.

Byways in peril

From Mr G. McI. Wilson

Sir, Pat chance, Lady Milner-Barry (letter, February 1), see also letters, February 4). The Countryside Commission wants exactly the reverse of a ban on petrol-driven vehicles on byways. It proposes the reclassification of "all unsealed unclassified roads and BOATS (byways open to all traffic), by statute, as byways carrying a right of use by all categories of user, including vehicles ...".

The only thing green about these roads will be the wetlies required to traverse them.

Yours faithfully,
GORDON WILSON,
Foxhill House, Foxhill,
Swindon, Wiltshire SN4 0DS,
February 4.

From Mr Toby Marsden

Sir, The type of damage to which Lady Milner-Barry refers is extremely unusual. In the vast majority of cases the use of green roads by light recreational vehicles (as opposed to the agricultural vehicles that cause most of the damage) actually maintains the shape and character of the lane.

Removing vehicular rights allows landowners to remove hedges and plough the surface. A ban on motor vehicles using green roads would cause irrevocable damage to these most valuable ancient monuments.

Yours faithfully,
TOBY MARSDEN,
Orleton Manor, Orleton,
Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 4HR,
February 1.

From Mr Richard Buxton

Sir, Yann Borgstedt's letter on behalf of Anglia International Airport (January 26) suggests a benign airfield with only "ten commercial flights a day". In fact, his company's proposals involve on average 220 aircraft movements a day (80,340 movements a year were applied for). In addition to commercial use, there would be many recreation and training flights.

The public inquiry is considering whether Suffolk Coastal District Council should have a policy of allowing aviation to start again at Bentwaters at all. It proposes a "low intensity" aviation use. But, surprisingly, it has in mind 50,000 movements as appropriately "low" intensity.

Many people who value the surrounding Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty for its tranquillity, not just those concerned with Snape Maltings (letter, January 21), consider that any resumption of flying from Bentwaters would be disastrous. Once an airport is established, there is always further pressure for expansion.

The resulting annoyance is made worse by the existence of a rule that aircraft are exempt from legal action for noise nuisance. When this became law in 1920, it was understandably intended to protect the fledgling aircraft industry. Times have changed, and its application should be reviewed.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD BUXTON,
(Solicitor — environmental law),
40 Clarendon Street,
Cambridge CB1 1JX.

Scattered relics of Saint Valentine

From the Very Reverend Paul Chavasse

Sir, Your report on St Valentine's relics (February 3) overlooks the fact that England, too, has the bones of a St Valentine. These can be found in the Oratory Church in Edgbaston.

They were a gift from Pope Pius IX to the then Father John Henry Newman, on the occasion of his return to England in 1848. The Pope told Newman to celebrate this Valentine's feast on his, Newman's, birthday — February 21; a custom we maintain.

Yours sincerely,
PAUL CHAVASSE
(Provost), The Oratory,
Hagley Road, Edgbaston B16 8UE,
February 3.

From Mrs Regine Tatham

Sir, Glasgow and Dublin may not be the only cities to claim the remains of St Valentine. It would seem that Winchester may also have been a much earlier repository for some of these, acquired by no less a person than Queen Emma, wife of Ethelred the Unready and subsequently of King Cnut.

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle states in 1042: "King Harthacnut passed away at Lambeth on 8 June... and he is buried in the Old Minster in Winchester with King Cnut, his father." In a footnote, it adds that "for his soul's sake, his mother gave into New Minster the head of St Valentine the martyr".

Unfortunately there is no record of what happened subsequently to this venerable object. It may have been swept away by Wriothesley, Henry VIII's commissioner, when in 1538, after despoiling the cathedral and priory of its treasures, his men came back the next day to disperse the remaining bones of the saints. "Ist it be thought they came for the gold and silver alone?"

Yours sincerely,
REGINE TATHAM,
6 St James Terrace, Winchester,
Hampshire SO2 4PP,
February 4.

Celtic literature

From Mr Matthew J. Pearson

Sir, I was surprised to read in Anne Rooney's review of *The Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature* (Books, February 4) that "the inclusion of Welsh and Irish vernacular writing is more politically correct than relevant". I disagree with such a sentiment: the appearance in the Cambridge study of Celtic vernacular literature is not a sign of political correctness but more an indication of academic maturity. Many of the religious issues and concerns identified in Welsh and Irish writings echo the feelings enshrined in, for instance, English devotional tracts.

Moreover, the Celtic world contributed to the development and transmission of Arthurian Romances, a theme of tremendous significance to medieval English literature. In short, the Celtic material provides valuable comparative insights which can only enrich the understanding of the literature of this period.

Within the past decade it has become the norm in general studies of medieval history and literature to analyse the British Isles as a whole, and it is a pity Anne Rooney disagrees with this trend.

Yours faithfully,
MATTHEW J. PEARSON,
School of History and Welsh History,
University of Wales,
Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 2DG,
February 4.

Golden years

From Mr Vivian Vale

Sir, I like to think of middle age (letters, January 5, 12, 19, 26 and 28; February 1) as that precious interval after one's doctor has ceased to assure one that "you'll grow out of it", but not yet begun to pronounce "you'll learn to live with it".

Yours faithfully,
VIVIAN VALE,
Middle House, 22 Long Street,
Cerne Abbas, Dorset DT2 7JF,
February 5.

From Mr D. S. Norton

Sir, Middle age occurs when you stop complaining about how much money you have to put into your pension scheme, and start asking how much more you could put in.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID NORTON,
The Granary, Tickenham Court,
Tickenham, Bristol BS21 6SX.

From Mr M. T. W. Tod

Sir, I can assure Mr A. W. Tod (letter, February 1) that one well-known symptom of the onset of old age is writing specifically to the bottom right-hand corner of *The Times* letters page — and if he realises on the basis that this letter fulfils the criterion, I'll restrict lavatory breaks on our longer journeys together.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL TOD,
Brookside, Padmoor Lane,
Upton, Lincolnshire DN21 5NH,
mike@ath.co.uk
February 1.

OBITUARIES

KING HUSSEIN OF JORDAN

King Hussein of Jordan died in Amman of cancer yesterday aged 63. He was born on November 14, 1935, and succeeded his father as King on August 11, 1952.

Hussein bin Talal, the third ruler of the Hashemite kingdom of Jordan, could claim to be the longest-ruling monarch of his time and one of the most skilful politicians of the second half of the 20th century. He controlled the fortunes of his country for well over half its history, turning what was an artificial creation with few resources, little cohesion and an uncertain future into a modern, orderly and stable state.

During his time on the throne of Jordan, his tiny but strategically placed country often seemed to face extinction. Predatory neighbours, Middle East conflicts, Arab nationalism and civil war all threatened to destroy the country and the Hashemite monarchy. But each time Hussein held on and prevailed. By the time of his death, most Jordanians had known no other ruler. He gave his country an identity and a patriotic substance that made it, improbably, an oasis of moderation in a harsh desert of hatred. Most Jordanians knew that they were better ruled than almost all the Arabs around them.

King Hussein's international importance went far beyond his small, dusty country. Over four decades Jordan became the pivot on which depended, at various times, Israel's security, Iraq's economy, a Western role in the Middle East and the future of Arab nationalism and Islamic fundamentalism. For this reason, Hussein stood at the centre of all Middle Eastern politics. He was a frequent visitor to the White House and to Downing Street, a familiar figure at international gatherings and the funerals of world statesmen, a man whose unrivalled experience of politics gave him an authority and standing in direct contrast to his small physical stature.

By the 1990s he had also become a popular and respected figure in his own country. Millions lined the streets to welcome him home in 1992 after his first brush with cancer; even more turned out with spontaneous displays of affection when he returned again last month after six months at the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota to quell what he saw as dangerous dynastic squabbling. He had, since then, been compelled to go back to America for treatment, finally returning to Jordan when it was clear that there was no further remedy.

But his popularity was far from assured at the start of his reign when, as a boy king, he prematurely succeeded his father, Talal, who had been forced to abdicate on health grounds. His survival, and that of his kingdom, owed as much to his personal qualities as it did to Western military support in times of need or the new international legal system established with the United Nations. Above all, it was King Hussein's courage, intuition and political acumen in sensing which way the wind blew that saved him. In the Western world, he was the humane face of Arab tradition. By contrast, most Arabs suspected his loyalty, on account of his secret dealings with Israel and close relations with the West, particularly Britain and the United States. But by the end even his opponents admired his tenacity and his record of magnanimity. No ruler would have lasted so long in one of the world's most turbulent regions without his cunning; but few would have dared to spare the lives of the many ringleaders who plotted his assassination, murdered his advisers and tried to usurp his authority.

A "tightrope walker" was a description often applied to him. He was bullied by bigger neighbours, seemed always vulnerable, and was nearly always the underdog. In his early years, in the turbulent anti-Western atmosphere whipped up by Nasser and other Arab nationalists after Suez, he was the target of more than half a dozen assassination attempts — either by Syrian jet fighters trying to shoot down his plane or by plotters within the palace substituting acid for eyeprops or poison for toothpaste.

Had they succeeded, Jordan would almost certainly have been thrown into the pit of blood-letting that swallowed republican Iraq, Syria and Egypt. His radical critics

might also have given a pretext to hardliners in Israel to seize a large part of the East Bank of the Jordan River, to expel the bulk of the Palestinians from the West Bank across the river, and to declare that Jordan was now Palestine and that the problem was solved.

Hussein bin Talal was born in November 1935, at a time when the newly created state of Jordan subsisted on a £12 million grant from Britain. His father, Crown Prince Talal, and his mother, Princess Zain, lived in a modest house with a single bathroom in Amman. Money was scarce — so much so that at one time Hussein was ordered to sell a bicycle that his cousin, the young King Faisal II of Iraq, had given him during a visit to Baghdad.

A more serious worry for the family was the growing moodiness and violence of his father, though only later were the symptoms recognised as those of schizophrenia. The King, Abdullah, misunderstood his son's problems and directed his affections towards his grandson. From an early age, the boy would be taken to Abdullah's presence to spend hours listening to reports and deliberations with advisers. For his primary and secondary education he was sent to a number of schools, including one in Alexandria, Egypt.

In 1948 Britain withdrew its forces from Palestine on the expiry of its League of Nations mandate. The Jews declared an independent state of their own, the Arabs around them invaded and were defeated, and King Abdullah annexed the West Bank and Arab-dominated East Jerusalem to Jordan. Passions ran high and, on Friday, July 20, 1951, Hussein saw his grandfather fall to a Palestinian assassin's bullet as he entered the Al Aqsa mosque on Temple Mount. It was for him, as he later wrote in his vivid autobiography *Uneasy Lies the Head*, a rite of passage. He learnt in that moment of grief and panic that there were enemies around him. He grew up quickly.

The crown passed to Abdullah's deteriorating son, and Hussein was sent to Britain, to be educated at Harrow, where King Faisal was already a pupil. There, by all accounts, he enjoyed being treated as a normal young man and displayed considerable spirit at rugby. But the respite was not to last. Back in Amman, his father's irrationality deepened, to the extent that Queen Zain and her younger children feared for their lives and refused to return from Europe. On August 11, 1952, the two Houses of Parliament in Amman dismissed Talal and declared the 16-year-old Hussein his successor.

Hussein returned to Jordan immediately and toured the country to show himself to the army and clan chiefs. Then he returned to Britain for a few months at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, to learn the rudiments of soldiering while he awaited his formal inauguration as King.

The future looked grim for the remaining monarchies of the Middle East. In Iran, the popular movement to nationalise the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company had reduced the Shah to a titular role, while in Egypt a group of army officers had toppled King Farouk and planned to end ties with Britain. In Jordan itself, the ruling family lacked legitimacy in the eyes of most subjects, especially Palestinian refugees, who then formed a majority. The first King, Abdullah, was the son of the former Sharif of Mecca, driven out after Ibn Saud's conquest of the peninsula and installed by Britain as the ruler of the new state largely drawn up by Churchill to safeguard British interests in the area. Above all, the uprooting of large numbers of Arabs from Palestine and the widespread Arab sense of shame raised passions against all those who were seen as collaborators with outsiders — especially with Britain, the former mandate power.

The young King realised that his position was precarious. He moved swiftly to appoint a liberal Prime Minister and to hold relatively free elections, only to dismiss both when his critics won the majority of parliamentary seats and organised demonstrations against him. He dismissed Lieutenant-General Sir John Bagot Glubb, "Glubb Pasha",



as commander of the army, the Arab Legion, and negotiated subsidies with his enemies, such as Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia, to replace the grant from Britain (though only the Saudis delivered their share). He declared his readiness to attack Israel after the Israeli invasion of the Sinai peninsula in the Suez crisis of 1956, but was dissuaded at the last minute by advisers who pointed out that the Anglo-Jordanian Treaty, which was still in place, would not protect him from Israeli retaliation.

Nevertheless, his critics were not satisfied. Cairo radio, which was popular in Jordan, regularly denounced him as "the Hashemite whore" and "the treacherous dwarf" for refusing to subsume his country in the new United Arab Republic of Egypt and Syria. At home, he had to be on guard constantly against plotters in the army and assassins in the palace. Students made a regular habit of burning the Jordanian flag.

To opponents of the Hashemites, the Royal Family appeared always to put its own dynastic interests before the greater Arab cause; Hussein's defence — that Israel could not be defeated militarily — although true, was seen as pretext. Some members of the family infuriated the King himself in their rush to gather wealth. Hussein on more than one occasion admonished the most disliked, his powerful maternal uncle, Nasser bin Jamil, for his shady business dealings and lucrative monopolies.

The decade after the Suez crisis was one of survival and consolidation for Hussein. He struck back at the President of the United Arab Republic, Gamal Abdel Nasser, for "hiding behind UN armistice lines while criticising smaller states for not attacking Israel", and he survived the murder of his cousin, King Faisal II, in Iraq's military coup of July 1958, when British troops rushed to Jordan to bolster its morale. Before the coup, Hussein had united his country with Iraq to counter the United Arab

Republic, and had even placed his army under Iraqi command.

When the Six-Day War of June 1967 erupted, Hussein faced an agonising dilemma. He knew full well that his country was no match for Israel, and that if he were to fight he would certainly be defeated and lose part of his kingdom. Yet such were the popular pressures that he could not stand aside. The result was the tragedy he predicted, particularly for the Palestinians of the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Never again was Hussein to hold sway over the Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem, a fact that continued to wound him for many years.

The next big crisis in his life proved almost as traumatic. Under Yasser Arafat, the newly invigorated Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) expanded its network widely in Jordan. By 1970 the *Jedeyeen* were virtually a state within a state, manning roadblocks and even levying taxes on thousands of Palestinian refugees in the country. PLO raids on Israeli targets across the ceasefire line provoked devastating Israeli retaliation against Jordanian villages. Such activity was a threat to Jordan on yet another level. Israel had at that time a secret plan to manufacture an incident to enable it to annex the East Bank, to which it would then expel the Palestinians of the West Bank, setting up a Palestinian state as a solution to its internal problems. It had been restrained from doing so only by repeated warnings from the United States, the personal friendship of whose Presidents Hussein had worked hard to gain.

The final straw came with the Palestinian hijacking of Western planes and the stand-off in the Jordan desert, where they landed and were finally blown up. Hussein was humiliated. The Jordan Army surrounded Dawson's Field, but could do nothing. On September 15, Hussein acted. He issued an ultimatum to the *Jedeyeen*, handed

over power to the army, and tanks entered Amman on September 17, beginning the devastating civil war known afterwards as "Black September". The largely Beduin army was brutal in pursuit of the guerrillas; the Palestinian civil population was cowed and afraid. At the height of the fighting, Syria sent tanks across the border. But the Jordan forces fought back fiercely, and the Syrians turned back. "We gave them a bloody nose," Hussein later said.

The conflict nevertheless caused consternation among Arab nationalists throughout the Middle East. Jordan was ostracised, and its monarch became a figure of hatred. The PLO was driven out of Jordan, but its terrorist operations were given a new boost. King Hussein moved swiftly to try to repair the damage, but relations inside the kingdom were tense, and the security services were given a free hand. They did not prevent the assassination of Wasfi al-Tal, the Jordanian Prime Minister and a close friend of the King, in 1971 in Cairo. But a spate of counter-assassinations, many by Israeli intelligence, also weakened the PLO, which abandoned the strategy of raids across the Israeli border.

Concentrating on his own country's security, Hussein was in no position — or mood — to join the wider struggle against Israel. In October 1973, when war came with a surprise attack across the Suez Canal and in the Golan Heights, Hussein was not consulted in advance. He sent only a token brigade up to the Golan Heights, ironically it was the 40th Armoured Brigade which had fought so hard against the Syrian tanks.

The Yom Kippur War set the course of many later events in the region. It was fought, for the first time, without the backing of the Soviet Union — President Sadat having previously expelled all Soviet military advisers from Egypt — and it was the only war in which the Egyptian Army acquitted itself reasonably well. It paved the way

for Henry Kissinger's surprise visit to Egypt, the rapid cooling of relations with Syria, President Sadat's decision to go it alone by visiting the Israeli Knesset in 1977 and the subsequent Camp David agreements of 1978.

Following the agreements, the American President, Jimmy Carter, urged King Hussein to follow suit and sign a similar bilateral peace treaty with Israel. But such was the anger in the Arab world for what it saw as betrayal by Egypt that he did not dare.

The war of 1973 had yet another consequence for Jordan. The Arab summit of October 1974 decided to recognise the PLO as the only representative of the Palestinian people. That decision hurt King Hussein personally, as well as politically. His family's legitimacy, as a dynasty rested on its claim to descend from the Prophet Muhammad, and he cherished his guardianship of the holy places of Islam in East Jerusalem. Now these were being taken away from him. He protested, but accepted the decision with grace. In return, Hussein set aside his bitter feud with Arafat — though there was no love lost between them.

After the Iraqi invasion of Iran in September 1980, which followed the toppling of King Hussein's long-time friend Shah Mohammad Reza by Muslim and left-wing radicals, he stepped in quickly on Iraq's side to make up for the closure of the Gulf to Iraqi shipping. Subsequently, for eight years, he turned Jordan into Iraq's main supply route and the Jordanian commercial class, including the Royal Family, reaped rich rewards. Later, King Hussein placed his political hopes in Saddam Hussein's advancement on the Arab scene and consistently supported the Iraqi ruler in his quest to dominate Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. It was a fatal friendship, that was later to cost the King dear.

The second Gulf War of 1991, in which 29 nations, including many Arab ones, sent forces to Saudi Arabia to liberate Kuwait from the grip of Saddam Hussein, endeared King Hussein to Arab nationalists. While saying that the annexation of a sovereign country was unacceptable, he refused to condemn Saddam's action and opposed the dispatch of American and British aircraft to Saudi Arabia. He described the invasion as "understandable", and called for negotiation with Saddam. He even hailed the fantastic demand of the Iraqi ruler — the immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Palestinian-occupied territories in return for talks over Kuwait — as "laudable, legitimate and realistic".

During the brief war, thousands of Palestinian workers left the Gulf for, or were expelled to, Jordan, and the oil-rich states, hitherto the main suppliers of cash to King Hussein, ended all their support to him. The United States President, George Bush, although furious with Hussein's "betrayal", decided quickly to forgive him. Jordan's co-operation was needed for a new Middle East peace conference that Washington was planning for Madrid later in the year.

King Hussein was later to describe his attempt to stop the war and to intercede with Saddam as one of the hardest and most painful of his life. He knew by then that Saddam was the kind of tyrant intent on keeping hold of his conquests, and that the West would go to war. But support for Iraq was overwhelming in Jordan. Had the King not attempted to ward off conflict, his throne would have been in danger. In the end he gave only verbal support to Iraq, and did nothing to help Saddam militarily. But it was enough to infuriate the Kuwaitis and Saudis. The Saudi Royal Family had long been suspicious of King Hussein's dynastic claims, and was determined to exploit his difficulties. Aid to Jordan was stopped immediately. Hussein was snubbed. It took almost eight years before Saudi Arabia restored normal relations again, and Kuwait held out even longer.

Hussein played a quiet but forceful role in trying to get the proposed Madrid peace conference off the ground. He persuaded prominent West Bankers to hold direct talks with Israel as part of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, and although the Madrid

conference failed to achieve a breakthrough, it paved the way for a regular dialogue between Israel and its neighbours.

Meanwhile, the Norwegians had set up a secret secondary channel. The PLO and the new Labour Government of Israel held secret talks for more than a year, which led to the astonishing news of their mutual recognition. Suddenly, Israelis appeared ready to negotiate directly with Arafat, and he with them. Jordan was cut out of the picture. When these talks were revealed to the world in 1993, it was an unpleasant surprise for King Hussein, and he feared that Jordan was again being sidelined. But he accepted the setback with grace, once again, and he proceeded to sign his own, highly unpopular peace treaty with Israel in 1994.

After that he lent his presence to high-profile occasions in an attempt to keep moving along the bumpy path of peace. For this, he won the admiration of many millions of people all over the world, especially in Israel, where even the Likud came to see him as indispensable for regional peace. His speech at the funeral of the assassinated Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin surprised the Israelis by its warmth, visionary idealism and hopes for reconciliation. His use of the word "brother" particularly touched Israeli public opinion, and arguably laid to rest many old suspicions of Arab intentions — although it evoked just as many in the Arab world. The King also visited the homes of Israeli victims of Jordanian terrorists, and in October 1998 he intervened in the Israeli-Palestinian talks at Wye Plantation in the United States, despite already appearing to be in the last stages of cancer.

King Hussein's enduring characteristics were courage, modesty and humour — the last owing something, perhaps, to his British education. Interviewers were always taken aback by his calling them "Sir". But he also had a charisma and a pride that placed him very much in the line of earlier — absolute — monarchs. The difference was Hussein's magnanimity, which again and again set the example for a political system which, despite being a royal dictatorship, was certainly benign. King Hussein had a patriarchal belief that his country was like his family, and felt it his duty to educate it and lead it to political maturity. But he never doubted that he should be at its head as a King in power as well as name. He was a noted pilot, and often flew himself around the world, famously dipping his wings once in salute as he flew over Israel after concluding the peace agreement.

He dies at a time when the future of Jordan looks more secure than at any other period in his long reign, though the final dramatic disinheritance of his brother Hassan, Crown Prince since 1965, caused considerable alarm. Prince Abdullah, who was nominated in his place during the dramatic week when the King returned from the Mayo Clinic in January, has the all-important support of the army; and Prince Hassan appears, at least for now, to have accepted his disinheritance with equanimity. King Hussein, with a young taste for fast living, pretty girls and daredevil, almost impish, behaviour, was married four times. The first, unhappy brief marriage to Princess Dina ended quickly in divorce. His marriage to Toni Gardiner, the daughter of a British Army officer, was a political risk, because she was an English Christian. Becoming a Muslim and taking the name Princess Munira, she brought him great happiness and four children. Their marriage ended in a surprisingly amicable divorce, and Hussein then married Alia Toukan, the daughter of a prominent Palestinian family. He loved her deeply, but the short marriage — which produced three children — ended in tragedy when she was killed in a helicopter accident. He was devastated.

His final marriage was to Lisa Halaby, the daughter of a wealthy Lebanese-American chairman of Pan Am. She converted, became Queen Noor, and was a visible and prominent "modern" Queen, with some of the glamour and flair for publicity that we associate with the late Princess of Wales. She, too, bore him four children.

Latest wills

Lady Rogers, wife of Sir Frank Rogers, director of *The Daily Telegraph*, left estate valued at £1,335,707 net.

The Hon Dinah Bridge, of Lewes, East Sussex, left estate valued at £904,817 net. She left £1,000 to Morpeth Society Housing Association.

Sir John Stephenson, Lord Justice of Appeal 1971-85, left estate valued at £642,834 net. The Hon Lady Lyell, of St Albans, Hertfordshire, left estate valued at £4,185,825 net. She left £1,000 to the Flammstead PCC.

Noel Whitaker Harrison, of Alrewas, Burton on Trent, Staffordshire, left estate valued at £39,541,187 net.

Myrtle Violet Willis, of Bullington, Sutton Scotney, Wiltshire, left estate valued at £664,417 net. She left £1,000 to the Winchester Hospital Scanner Appeal.

Christopher Paul Mansel Methuen-Campbell, of Reynoldston, Gower, Swansea,

left estate valued at £3,248,385 net. Mary Elizabeth Johnston, of Sway, Hampshire, left estate valued at £2,600,728 net.

Elizabeth Nancy MacNab, of Rugby, Warwickshire, left estate valued at £2,489,568.

Margaret Nicholson of London SW1, left estate valued at £2,288,107 net.

Jakob Walter Robinson, of Sunningdale, Berkshire, left estate valued at £2,666,357 net. Air Marshal Sir John Baker-Carr, of Stockbridge, Hampshire, left estate valued at £286,792 net.

Marion Sybil Beatty, of Exmouth Devon, left estate valued at £1,180,088 net. She left £1,000 each to Barnardo's, Marie Curie Memorial Foundation, British Home and Hospital for Incurables, Guide Dogs for the Blind,

Distressed Gentlefolks' Aid, John A Thompson Memorial Trust, Fairlyrich Museum and National Trust.

Lieutenant-Commander Mark Hamilton Freer Chaytor, of Ashton, Sheffield, left estate valued at £1,536,251.

Mildred Louise Davenport of London SW7, left estate valued at £1,638,105 net.

Robert Lush of London SW1, left estate valued at £1,225,174. Hector Donald Elston Macvicie, of Bath, Somerset, left estate valued at £1,595,846 net. Mary Margerison of Lytham, Lancashire, left estate valued at £1,427,653 net. She left £1,000 to both the Friends of Lytham Hospital and St John's Church, East Beach, Lytham, and £500 to the Church of England.

Frank Peagram of Salisbury Green, Southampton, left es-

tate valued at £1,904,723 net. Iris Dorothea Rockborough Smith, of Brimsdown, Dorset, left estate valued at £1,423,308 net. She left £3,000 each to National Trust, British Red Cross Society and Dorset Hospice Charitable Trust.

John Arthur Smith, of Disley, Stockport, Cheshire, left estate valued at £1,560,658 net.

Peter William Oliver Ward of Handsworth Wood, Birmingham, left estate valued at £1,081,203 net.

Bertha Elizabeth Watkin, of Oswestry, Shropshire, left estate valued at £1,204,508 net.

Elspeth Whitmore, of Hartfield, East Sussex, left estate valued at £1,833,553 net. John Penny Williams, of Port-dinorwic, Gwynedd, left estate valued at £1,151,393 net.

Doris Alice Wright, of Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, left estate valued at £2,305,834 net.

Esra Sami Menashi Zilouf of London N20, left estate valued at £2,133,999 net.

CABINET ESCAPES BOMB BLAST

By STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

SCOTLAND YARD was last night hunting a two-man terrorist team which bombed 10 Downing Street with mortars from a van as the war cabinet met yesterday morning. The attack was one of the most audacious ever carried out by the IRA.

One bomb exploded in the garden, breaking windows, disrupting the meeting and throwing Whitehall into panic. Two other bombs landed without exploding behind the Foreign Office.

Four people, including two policemen, were slightly injured in the incident, which brought the IRA as close to the heart of British government as the Brighton bomb in 1984. In the aftermath of the blast, ministers began an urgent examination of security in Whitehall and Westminster.

In a statement from Dublin last night claiming responsibility for the attack, the IRA said: "The operation had been planned over a number of months. Its inception predates both John Major's coming to power and the beginning of British involvement in the Gulf War. Whether the Gulf War goes on for weeks

ON THIS DAY

February 8, 1991

The blast from this audacious raid by the IRA shook the windows of Buckingham Palace: a crater about four feet wide appeared in the garden of No 10.

or years, let the British Government understand that, while nationalist people in the six counties are forced to live under British rule, then the British cabinet will be forced to meet in bunkers."

Charles Haughey, the Irish Prime Minister, sent Mr Major a message expressing "shock and sympathy" at the outrage. As a national police hunt began for the bombers, Commander George Churchill-Coleman, head of the Yard's anti-terrorist branch and the national co-ordinator of terrorist investigations, told a conference in London that the attack had been daring and well-planned. "It is an example of how good

and versatile this organisation is," he said, but added that the plan had been badly executed. "These mortars are extremely dangerous and very inaccurate. It is a typical example of a cowardly attack, which could have caused death or severe injury."

A white Ford Transit van, bought in south London six months ago, was driven up to the junction of Horse Guards Avenue and Whitehall close to the Ministry of Defence. The roof of the van had been removed and a platform had been built inside for a crude mortar unit using metal piping. The roof had been put back in place, secured with tape, and the mortars were covered with sheeting.

The van was abandoned at an angle. The driver locked it and is thought to have jumped onto the pillion seat of a waiting motorcycle, which sped off towards the Embankment. No parking is allowed in Whitehall and the three bombs were fired through the roof as a policeman went towards the van.

Within seconds the vehicle exploded in a ball of fire. The mortar used a short fuse and one police source last night said the IRA "had timed the attack to perfection".

One bomb went off in the communal garden behind Nos 10, 11 and 12 Downing Street, creating a bang that could be heard up to 12 miles away, and a cherry tree was blasted out of the ground about 40ft from where Mr Major was sitting.

05.1.20.11.04



CULTURED PEARL

Gold Cup favourite sparkles at Leopardstown
PAGE 38

FLYING START

Five Nations joy for Scotland, misery for Ireland
PAGES 34, 35

OLÉ, OLÉ, OLÉ, OLÉ

Solskjaer joins in United's goalscoring party
PAGE 29

Wilkinson takes over
PAGE 27

TIMES SPORT

MONDAY FEBRUARY 8 1999

INDIAN SPINNER MATCHES LAKER IN TAKING ALL TEN WICKETS



One out, all out: Kumble appeals successfully for the wicket of Wasim, caught at short leg to give the India leg spinner his tenth victim of the Pakistan innings in Delhi yesterday

When the final wicket came his way, Anil Kumble clasped his hands, beamed like the sun and looked to the sky. He uprooted a stump as a souvenir simply of victory against Pakistan. Then, as Sachin Tendulkar led a procession of colleagues moving to offer congratulations, it dawned that he had taken his place in history.

If Kumble needed a few seconds for the scale of his achievement to sink in after becoming the second man in 122 years of Test cricket to take all ten wickets in an innings, then he will not be allowed to forget it. The manner in which he was mobbed by autograph collectors and well-wishers as he left the Ferozeshah Kotla Stadium unprovided a taste of what is to come.

His figures of ten for 74 from 26.3 overs eased India to success by 212 runs in the second Test to level what was already a compelling series, in which the sheer excitement of the cricket has transcended past bitter rivalry between the neighbouring countries. For his contribution to that alone, Kumble's performance must rank alongside that of Jim Laker, whose feat in taking ten Australia wickets for 53 at Old Trafford in 1956 is one of the best-known of all the game's records.

Before his death in 1986, Laker related how the capacity at Manchester must have been nearer to 100,000 than the official figure of around 20,000 to accommodate all those who said that they witnessed his great day. Some 30,000 can honestly claim to have seen Kumble join the pantheon of spin bowlers.

With the eighth and ninth victims falling to the final balls of Kumble's 26th over, he was sent to field at third man while Javagal Srinath sent down six balls, any one of which — had the seam bowler been so minded — would have ruined his chance of going through the scorecard. Unbeknown to Kumble, Mohammad

Richard Hobson in Delhi sees an unassuming bowler make an indelible mark in Test history

Azharuddin, the captain, had ordered Srinath to bowl wide to allow the leg spinner the chance of a tenth wicket.

"By that stage, they were so far behind that we were going to win and there are not many situations where a bowler has the chance to take all ten," Azharuddin said. Srinath, in fact, followed his instructions too well. The bowler, a paradigm of accuracy, suddenly delivered a brace of wickets. Even more bizarre, the partisan crowd began to cheer every ball that Wasim Akram and Waqar

Younis blocked against Srinath instead of baying for victory. They wanted Kumble to finish the job that he had begun around two hours and 40 minutes earlier.

Although Wasim survived the hat-trick ball, he edged the third via his pad to Laxman at short leg to herald a colourful display of flag-waving and delirious dancing in the stands. "After I had taken the sixth wicket, I thought I might have a chance of all ten," Kumble said. "I was not particularly nervous because I knew it was a matter of destiny. If I was destined to

get ten wickets, then that is what would happen. My first reaction was how good to beat Pakistan. In that moment, I had forgotten it was my tenth wicket."

"I think a little superstition helped because, after lunch, when we needed to break the opening partnership, I gave my cap and sweater to Sachin to give to the umpire. Shahid Afridi got out in that over and whenever we left the pitch that offered slow turn but variable bounce, he caused far more problems than Harbhajan Singh, the off spinner, who bowled in tandem for much of the innings. Kumble suggested that the performance of young Sandeepan Ramesh in scoring 60 and 96 in difficult circumstances made him a more deserving recipient of the man-of-the-match award. To all else, including Cammie Smith, the adjudicator, Kumble had no rivals. The new star of India is among the guests at a reception hosted by the Home Minister in the capital tonight and will try to remain unfazed by the potential rewards of success. Azharuddin, who knows him better than most, said: "He has tried so hard with his bowling that he deserves this. He has worked out his limitations and now just bowls to his strengths."

28, who hails from Bangalore. In descending order he dedicated his achievement to God, his family and his team-mates. He enjoyed success with Northamptonshire, when he took 105 wickets in the 1995 season, and in 51 Tests since his debut in 1992, he has taken 234 wickets, making him the fourth most successful India bowler of all time.

Although he does not spin his standard leg-break as much as Shane Warne or Mushtaq Ahmed, among contemporaries, his height and high action make the top-spinner a deadly weapon. This helps to explain why, on a pitch that offered slow turn but variable bounce, he caused far more problems than Harbhajan Singh, the off spinner, who bowled in tandem for much of the innings.

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At a chaotic press conference, Kumble had to protect his head with his hands to push his way through a jostling crowd of admiring Indian journalists. He was asked whether the next ambition is to take 20 wickets in a match. "I know that expectations will be higher from now on," he said, "but I would rather take ten wickets and have to live with that pressure than not at all." Even Laker only managed 19.



Uplifting: Srinath, left, and Prasad chair Kumble from the field after his record-equalling performance

A PERFECT TEN

- 101-1 Afridi nudges wide ball to wicketkeeper
- 101-2 Next ball, leg before to full-length delivery
- 115-3 Inzamam inside edge onto stumps
- 115-4 Youhana leg before with bat behind pad
- 122-5 Mohi caught low at slip
- 128-6 Saeed Anwar pushes firmly to short leg
- 186-7 Salim Malik bowled by top-spinner
- 198-8 Mushtaq caught at slip as ball turns sharply
- 198-9 Saqlain hit on toe first ball to be leg before
- 207-10 Wasim Akram caught at short leg via his pad

TEST BESTS

MOST WICKETS BY BOWLERS IN AN INNINGS

10-53	J C Laker	England v Australia	Old Trafford	1956
10-74	A M Kumble	India v Pakistan	Delhi	1999
9-28	S A Lohmeyer	England v South Africa	Johannesburg	1895-96
9-37	J C Laker	England v Australia	Old Trafford	1956
9-52	R J Hadlee	New Zealand v Australia	Brisbane	1985-86
9-68	Abdul Qadir	Pakistan v England	Lahore	1987-88
9-57	D E Malcolm	England v South Africa	The Oval	1994
9-65	M Muralitharan	Sri Lanka v England	The Oval	1998
9-69	J M Patel	India v Australia	Kanpur	1959-60
9-83	Kapil Dev	India v West Indies	Ahmedabad	1983-84
9-86	Saviraz Nawaz	Pakistan v Australia	Melbourne	1978-79
9-95	J M Noriega	West Indies v India	Port of Spain	1970-71
9-102	S P Gupta	India v West Indies	Kanpur	1958-59
9-103	S F Barnes	England v South Africa	Johannesburg	1913-14
9-113	H J Tayfield	South Africa v England	Johannesburg	1956-57
9-121	A A Malloy	Australia v England	Melbourne	1920-21

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Exclusive club welcomes its second member

**John Woodcock recalls the day that
Jim Laker set a record that
stood for 43 years until yesterday**



Laker, the great off spinner, who routed Australia at Old Trafford

If he were still alive Jim Laker would, I am sure, be delighted that it is Anil Kumble who has become only the second man to take all ten wickets in an innings in a Test match. Although Laker turned the ball from the off, whereas Kumble's stock ball is the leg break, they both owe, or owed, their success to patience, expediency and know-how, and neither of them came into the world as one of nature's games players. Kumble, like Laker, is a big fellow, with a measured stride rather than easy style.

Laker, of course, had taken nine wickets in Australia's first innings, as well as the ten he took in the second, in his great Test match at Old Trafford in 1956. In doing so, he made sure England won the Ashes for the third time in a row. Not entirely without justification, Australia thought they were being set up in England that year. I can see now the clouds of dust when the ground staff attended to the pitch even at lunchtime on the first day of the match, though it was, in fact, after it had rained on the fifth, and last day that Laker ran through Australia's second innings.

The forward prop in its present heinous form, with the bat hidden behind the pad, had yet to be invented, and the incomparably cavalier Keith Miller was as defenceless

against Laker's sharply turning off breaks as the famously obtuse Ken Mackay. Fielding at short leg to Laker in that match must have been the experience of a lifetime. Those who had the joy and privilege of doing so were Tony Lock, who stood behind square, Alan Oakman, who held five catches, and the retired Bishop of Liverpool, the Rt Rev the Lord Sheppard.

The regulations are such today that the days are gone when Australia, or anyone else for that matter, can be caught on a sticky dog. Laker and Kumble took their chance when the chance was there. Having done so, Laker walked off the field, his sweater slung over his shoulder, showing far less emotion than an English off spinner does today when he gets a single Australian wicket, let alone 19 in a match. The AS was the road back to London from Manchester in those days, and a pint and a quick bite at Woodon, unrecognised by most of the locals, was Jim's lot that night.

But he had assumed a place in cricket history unique until Kum-

ble's superlative feat in Delhi yesterday. It would be hard to imagine anything more perfect than that India and Pakistan should have shared their potentially fraught and unplayable two-match series in the way they did — after some wonderfully exciting and fluctuating cricket. As one who does not entirely subscribe to the theory that if the Russians and the Germans had played cricket it would have changed the course of history, I like to think that this short series may, indeed, have done good.

The bowlers who win the modern Test matches that matter most — and to a great part of the world's population this one in Delhi, between Hindu and Muslim, must have seemed to matter an awful lot — are the very best leg spinners and the very best fast bowlers. That is bad news for England, who have never had a great Test-winning leg spinner and in the English climate are never likely to. For India, they constitute a lifeline. Kumble may not be quite as subtle and alluring an exponent of the leg-spinning art

as S. P. Gupta was, nor perhaps, as widely devastating as Bhagwat Chandrasekhar, but he has become a legend overnight, and that can only be for the good of the game.

For having been so obsessed with speed and bouncers under Clive Lloyd and Vivian Richards, West Indies are paying the price now that they can find no one to replace Roberts, Holding, Marshall and the rest of them: besides which, batsmen are not as intimidated in the way that they were by "pace like fire". Except, perhaps, in South Africa, this has been the winter of the spinner — of MacGill and Saqlain and Warne and now of Kumble. Tall and with long arms, Kumble makes up for not being a great spinner of the ball by making his top spinners and googlies bounce, and in Delhi he would have benefited, I would expect, from the odd ball keeping low. I once wrote about England winning a Test match on a Christmas Day in Delhi. The boot was on the other foot, but that, too, was an occasion for rejoicing in every way. It is better that a spinner should have a golden day than a thousand bludgeoning "quicks". When Laker became sanctified he was 34, and was to play only a few more times for England. At 28, Kumble should still have half a career ahead of him.

Australia certain to go for Waugh

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN SYDNEY

AS ENGLAND and Australia prepare to lock horns in the best-of-three final of the triangular tournament, Australia must address a serious matter. They have a captain to find, to succeed Mark Taylor, who handed in his badge last week, and his identity will be clear by the end of the week.

They don't have to look far to find suitable men. Steve Waugh is the star candidate, on grounds of experience and proven ability. Shane Warne is his rival, and Steve's twin, Mark, was picked out by Taylor in his resignation address as somebody who could do the job, if required.

It would be a major surprise if his brother did not get the nod. Waugh, 33, is the senior member of the side, having been introduced to Test cricket 13 years ago when Australia were not the force they are now. Alone among the current side he knows what it is like to lose to England.

The Australian Cricket Board is meeting on Friday, though it may announce its decision before then. Waugh is thought to have ten of the 14 votes.

England will be without Mark Alleyne for the three-match final after the death of his father, Eudie, in a car accident in Barbados. Alleyne, who learnt the news in a telephone call from his brother, will arrive at Heathrow tomorrow and leave for Barbados the day after.

David Graveney, the England manager, said: "It is tragic for Mark and his family; cricket is a minor event compared to this, but it will act as an inspiration to the players to do well for him."

Adam Gilchrist, the opening batsman, made the highest score by an Australian in a one-day international in the final group match of the tournament yesterday. Gilchrist made 154 off 129 balls at Melbourne as Australia amassed 310 for eight from their 50 overs and then bowled out Sri Lanka for 267.

AUSTRALIA

A C Gilchrist c Tikaram b Vasee	184
M S Waugh b Muralidharan	111
B P Langer c Jayawardene b Muralidharan	81
R T Ponting c Jayawardene b De Silva	61
S Latham c Samarawickrama	27
D R Martyn c Muralidharan	18
G P Wickramaratne	11
M G Bown not out	11
S Langer not out	3
S K Warne c Tikaram b Vasee	3
M S Kasprowicz not out	3
Extras (b 4, w 4, nb 2)	10
Total (47.1 overs)	310
GD McGrath did not bat	

SHRI LANKA

A C Gilchrist c Langer b Warne	75
R S Kaluwitharana c Langer b Warne	59
P A de Silva c Waugh b Lee	11
D P D Jayawardene run out	27
A Samarasinghe c Gilchrist b Lee	11
H P Tillekeratne c Ponting b Lee	12
M S Kasprowicz c Langer b Lee	14
W P U C Vasee b McGrath	14
T Samarawickrama b Lee	3
G P Wickramaratne c Gilchrist b McGrath	4
M Muralidharan not out	3
Extras (b 2, w 2, nb 4)	8
Total (47.1 overs)	267

FALL OF WICKETS 1-52, 2-62, 3-164, 4-186, 5-200, 6-225, 7-248, 8-255, 9-265

BOWLING McGrath 8-0-46-2, Kasprowicz 9-0-51-1, Muralidharan 3-4-15-2, De Silva 10-0-55-1, Tikaram 12-0-11-0, Samarasinghe 9-0-50-1, Jayawardene 7-0-45-0

FINAL TABLE

	P	W	L	PS
Australia	10	7	3	14
England	10	5	5	10
Sri Lanka	10	3	7	6

FINAL DATES (Australia v England): Wednesday: First match (Sydney); Friday: Second match (Melbourne); Sunday: Third match (if needed, Melbourne)

CRICKET

Ten out of ten for Kumble the destroyer

FROM RICHARD HOBSON IN DELHI

DELHI (fourth day of five): India beat Pakistan by 312 runs

IN THE manic excitement of Anil Kumble joining Jim Laker in history the sheer importance of victory for India here yesterday became too easy to overlook. By securing the win that eluded them dramatically in Madras seven days earlier, they not only levelled an absorbing series 1-1, and preserved an unbeaten home run stretching 12 years, but spared themselves from a level of criticism unimaginable in any other Test-playing nation.

The sense of joy and triumph pervading from all quarters of the Ferozeshah Kotla Stadium, except the Pakistan dressing-room, reflected the delight of a first victory in a Test against their fiercest rivals since January 1980, 23 matches ago. While most of the encounters in the intervening period were tepid, nurgid draws, the conclusion to this encounter represented a fine, fitting end to a remarkable fortnight.

The hard work for India had been done by the batsmen on Saturday, by Ramesh, Ganguly and Srivasth, in particular, to establish a lead beyond 400. Only twice before has a side passed such a total to win, and the conditions in Delhi gave too much assistance to the slow bowlers for Pakistan to stand any realistic chance. Even when Shahid Afridi and Saeed Anwar were

adding 101 for the first wicket in such attractive, carefree fashion, the sheer magnitude of a target of 420 seemed beyond them.

Inevitably, now, the first game of the Asian Test Championship, a triangular competition which also involves Sri Lanka, will be seen as the decider to this series. India and Pakistan meet in Calcutta on February 16, where crowds of around 70,000 daily will expect a repeat of the recent stimulating encounters. Nothing, surely, will match the achievement of Kumble in becoming the second man in Test cricket to take ten wickets in an innings, but with Wasim Akram and Mohammad Azharuddin continuing to pledge themselves to attack, then entertainment of some sort can be guaranteed.

The spin of Kumble and Saqlain Mushtaq, who took 21 and 20 wickets respectively in the series, will continue to be crucial. Saqlain returned his



Salim, the seventh of Kumble's victims, is bowled after playing across the line during his team's crushing defeat in Delhi yesterday

SCOREBOARD FROM DELHI

INDIA: First Innings 252 (M Azharuddin 67, S Ramesh 60, Saqlain Mushtaq 5 for 94)

	R	B	4s	6s
S Ramesh	60	10	1	0
V V S Laxman	29	4	0	0
R Dravid	29	4	0	0
S R Tendulkar	29	4	0	0
M Azharuddin	67	10	1	0
S C Ganguly	14	2	0	0
N R Monge	10	2	0	0
A Kumble	15	3	0	0
J Srinath	6	1	0	0
B K V Prasad	0	0	0	0
R Singh	0	0	0	0
Extras (b 13, lb 9, nb 9)	31			
Total	339			

FALL OF WICKETS 1-15, 2-100, 3-168, 4-183, 5-199, 6-199, 7-231, 8-331, 9-339

BOWLING Wasim Akram 21-3-43-3, Mushtaq Ahmed 12-3-42-0, Saqlain Mushtaq 46-4-13-125-4, Mushtaq Ahmed 28-4-8-2, Shahid Afridi 8-1-24-0

PAKISTAN: First Innings 172 (A Kumble 4 for 75)

	R	B	4s	6s
Saeed Anwar	89	15	1	0
Shahid Afridi	41	8	0	0
Ijaz Ahmed	10	2	0	0
Imran-ul-Haq	6	1	0	0
Yousuf Youhana	0	0	0	0
Younis Khan	0	0	0	0
Extras (b 13, lb 9, nb 9)	31			
Total	339			

Second Innings

	R	B	4s	6s
Saeed Anwar	89	15	1	0
Shahid Afridi	41	8	0	0
Ijaz Ahmed	10	2	0	0
Imran-ul-Haq	6	1	0	0
Yousuf Youhana	0	0	0	0
Younis Khan	0	0	0	0
Extras (b 13, lb 9, nb 9)	31			
Total	339			

FALL OF WICKETS 1-101, 2-101, 3-115, 4-115, 5-127, 6-128, 7-186, 8-198, 9-198

BOWLING Saqlain 12-3-50-0, Prasad 4-1-15-0, Kumble 26-3-74-10, Singh 18-5-51-0

Umpires: S A Ebadat (West Indies) and A V Jayawardene

His figures of 26-3-74-10 will be etched into the memory of Indian children, just as English boys, at least of previous generations, have been able to recite Laker's return of ten for 90 overall, at Old Trafford in 1956.

How different it might have been had Azharuddin not suggested that Kumble change ends after a first, inauspicious spell of five overs that cost 25 runs. Saeed was playing fluently and Afridi remained true to his instinct to hit hard and often. Once restricted, however, Afridi is prone to lose patience, as demonstrated by an unnecessary nudge outside off stump to a wide ball by Kumble on 41.

The dominoes tumbled. Ijaz was a clear leg-before victim to the next ball and, four overs later, the leaden-footed Ijazam and nervous Youhana fell within the space of three balls. From 101 for nothing, Pakistan had collapsed to 115 for four and the resolve that saw them overturn a position of apparently inevitable defeat in Madras now deserted them with the clatter of wickets.

A low catch by Ganguly at slip accounted for Moin before the departure of Saeed to an ineffectual lunge that found the hands of Laxman at short leg. Kumble's figures at tea were six for 58 from 21 overs; meanwhile, Harbhajan Singh and Javagal Srinath had suffered as edges either fell short of

fielders or balls narrowly failed to take the edge. When play resumed after tea Kumble's figures moved from being match-winning, to very good, to outstanding, to momentous in the space of 33 balls. Immune from nerves, he picked off the last four batsmen for 16 more runs, his impending place in the record books rousing the crowd to new, boisterous heights.

Salim Malik, batting with a runner because of a groin injury, misjudged a top-spinner. Then, to successive balls, Mushtaq Ahmed offered a simple catch to Dravid and Saqlain was leg-before. When Wasim played Kumble to Laxman via bat and pad the celebrations could begin.

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HOCKEY

Robinson inspires Reading revenge

BY SYDNEY FRISKIN AND CATHY HARRIS

A HAT-TRICK by Ken Robinson, the New Zealander, helped Reading to a 5-2 victory over Southgate in the National League premier division match at Trent Park yesterday. In their previous meeting on October 4, when Reading were the hosts, Southgate won 4-2.

Southgate's task might have seemed less forbidding if Rott, their centre forward, had converted a penalty stroke when the score was 3-0.

They will have consorted themselves, however, with victory in the men's indoor club championship at Crystal Palace on Friday, where they beat Old Loughionians 3-2 on penalty strokes after the full-time score had been 5-5.

A goal by Evannett from a short corner in the 44th minute gave Canterbury a 4-3 away win over East Grinstead, for whom Collins scored twice from short corners with Cleife adding to the score. Wicken scored two of the Canterbury goals. Nick

Thompson's two goals from short corners were not enough for Old Loughionians, who lost 6-2 away to Cannock. Kalbir Takher scored twice. Further goals were added by Sharpe, Mayer, Crutchley and Paul Edwards.

Tina Cullen, the England and Great Britain forward, inspired Hightown to a crushing 7-0 win over Sherwood in a fourth-round EHA Cup-tie with a hat-trick, giving the Merseysiders a weekend double after the 3-1 victory over Slough, the premier division champions, on Saturday.

Ipswich seized their chance to move six points clear of Slough at the top of the table when they cruised to a 4-1 win against Sutton Coldfield. As the teams compete for the four play-off places, Hightown held on to fourth spot ahead of Olton, who were relieved to learn that Kerry Moore, their England midfielder player, suffered nothing worse than a neck spasm after being stretched off at Leicester.

SQUASH

Jackman reclaims national title

BY COLIN MCQUILLAN

CASSANDRA JACKMAN, the England No 1, who had been out of the game recovering from ankle injuries for the past three months, yesterday reclaimed the British Squash National Squash Championship at the Manchester Velodrome with a 9-5, 3-9, 9-0, 9-6 win over Sue Wright, the defending champion, in 75 minutes.

"I cannot think of a time in my life when I wanted to play a tournament more," Jackman said. She withdrew from the first round of the Philadelphia Open early in October, when she went over on her left ankle, and played only a small tournament in Chicago late last month in preparation for this championship.

A former world junior champion, Jackman has been unable to break the Australian domination of the women's international game over the past six years, but has vied with Wright for top domestic billing and the third and fourth spots on the world list.

Yesterday, coached by David Campion, her fiancé, she began with some authority, taking the 20-minute opening game with some confident volleying in the front court. "I lost my way a bit in the second and third games, but David sent me back for the fourth to concentrate on playing my own game," Jackman said.

She won the fourth game in just six minutes and three hands, and was 6-1 up in the fifth before a series of harsh penalty calls against her from the referee brought Wright back into the match at 6-6. Jackman's return to calm rallying brought two unforced errors and a clumsy penalty infringement from Wright in the closing rallies of the match.

Later last night, Simon Parke, the defending men's champion from Yorkshire, was due to meet Paul Johnson, of Kent, the England No 1, in the men's final.

Results, page 40



Howard Wilkinson, pictured at Nottingham Forest's game against Manchester United at the City Ground on Saturday, accepts another goodwill message from a supporter

Wilkinson takes pride in first day at office

Howard Wilkinson began the task of sweeping away the legacy of stagnation, suspicion and cynicism bequeathed by Glenn Hoddle to his players last night when he gathered the England squad together at their Berkshire hotel to tell them to forget about the past and concentrate on the task of facing France, the world champions, at Wembley on Wednesday night.

The players, who arrived at Burnham Beeches at 5pm, were chosen by Hoddle, the last act of the discredited coach, but Wilkinson, a caretaker manager, relished his first chance to make his own mark when he held a squad meeting an hour later and encouraged the players to talk about any grievances or misgivings that they may have been harbouring.

Under Hoddle, many of the players had felt unable to express their feelings openly, especially after the publication of his World Cup diary with its wholesale betrayal of confidence, and the most recent team gatherings under his guidance had been characterised by an awkward silence. Last night, though, the mood at the meeting was relaxed.

As Wilkinson — who many now expect to be in charge not

just for the game against France but also for the European championship qualifying ties against Poland, next month, as well as Sweden and Bulgaria at the beginning of June — prepared for his first day in charge of training today, he attempted to change that.

"I had a team meeting with the players at the hotel," Wilkinson, 53, said, "and I told them the most important thing for England and them is that the game against France is an effective preparation for the Poland game."

"I felt proud to be standing there among such a gifted collection of players. It is difficult when you see them either from the dugout or pass them in the corridor."

Wilkinson did have to contend with one of the problems that dogged Hoddle throughout his 24 years in the job — a lengthy injury list. Paul Merson did not join up with the

Oliver Holt, football correspondent, finds England's caretaker relishing the challenge of facing France

squad because of a back problem and has been replaced by Jason Wilcox, the Blackburn Rovers midfielder player, who also has a heel injury.

Neither Gareth Southgate, Gary Neville, Sol Campbell, Dion Dublin, Graeme Le Saux nor Darren Anderson are expected to train this morning at Bisham Abbey and there is already talk of a defensive crisis.

"What a welcome to international football," Wilkinson said. "I will be thinking long and hard over the difficult decisions I am going to have to make over the next 24 hours. It is an injury situation that England have faced before."

Apart from one player, Campbell, who is bedridden,

everyone has turned up and no manager has asked me to leave anyone out. I am grateful for that."

Still, there was a feeling of relief among many of the players arriving at the team hotel last night that they could at last put the complicated, divisive and increasingly bizarre reign of Hoddle behind them. Influential groups of players within the squad had been alienated by the former England coach, but they are all keen to make the most of their chance for a fresh start.

Above all, there is a new mood of openness, the beginnings of an attempt to break down the hostility that has

existed for much of Hoddle's tenure between the press and the players and management. As part of this openness, players will now be allowed to talk to the media on the day before an international, something vetoed by Hoddle.

Earlier in the day, Wilkinson had ensured there would be at least one aspect of continuity remaining from Hoddle's troubled reign when it was confirmed that Alan Shearer would retain the captain's armband. Most observers had assumed that Tony Adams would regain the captaincy but Wilkinson, quite rightly, has decided to keep faith with the Newcastle United centre forward.

If Wilkinson's future was more secure, if he knew that he was to be in charge until the summer or beyond, then perhaps it would have made sense for him to go with his own man. But, especially if his tenure is short-lived, if he

really is to be just a caretaker, there seems little point in upsetting Shearer needlessly. "There has to be a willingness to take responsibility by the captain," Wilkinson said. "He needs to put the team before himself, to recognise the big picture. A complete captain does all of that, doesn't shrink, doesn't hide, shares the load and sacrifices himself for the team. Players who have those assets are very hard to find."

Gradually, and largely because possession is still nine tenths of any law, Wilkinson seems to be emerging as the favourite to succeed Hoddle on a permanent basis. Alex Ferguson, the Manchester United manager, joined Kevin Keegan, Arsène Wenger and Bryan Robson yesterday on the list of those who appear to have ruled themselves out of the running and Terry Venables, who is interested, said that he had had no contact from the Football Association.

"It's FA business," Venables said. "If you're asking me if they have been in touch, I have to say no. This time, it seems the shunters have gone up. Howard is an FA employee, so they obviously like him and will want him to be successful. It seems reasonable for them to want him to stay in control."

Football, pages 28-31

SPORT IN BRIEF

Hall survives fright to win place in final

BADMINTON: Darren Hall moved closer to increasing his titles to a record ten by surviving an unexpected battle with Richard Delling, who was unseeded, before reaching the final of the Liverpool Victoria English National championships in Haywards Heath yesterday. Hall, seeded No 1, won 15-11, 9-15, 15-10, but there were worrying moments, especially when he was 9-10 down in the final game and it seemed the 33-year old champion might not go through (Richard Eaton writes).

The win earned Hall his thirteenth appearance in the final and a repeat of his match against Colin Houghton last year. Houghton secured his place in the final with 15-17, 15-5, 15-5 win over Peter Knowles. Knowles had been hoping to regain the title in his first tournament after his two-month suspension for disciplinary offences at the Dutch Open. Houghton served a shorter suspension for his part in the same incident.

Air crash mars race

SAILING: The start of leg three of the Around Alone Race from Auckland to Punta del Este was marred by the death of two spectators whose light aircraft plunged into the sea close to Brad van Liew, the Class 2 United States skipper, in *Balance Bar*, five hours into the race (Edward Gorman, sailing correspondent, writes). The 11 skippers still in the race were beating down the Colville Channel when race headquarters was notified that an aircraft had crashed close to Van Liew, himself an experienced pilot. He immediately sailed to the point of impact, but found no trace of survivors. It is believed that the aircraft had been circling the fleet and been spotted by a number of skippers, including Giovanni Soldini, in the Open 60, FILA.

Hingis returns to No 1

TENNIS: Martina Hingis will go back to the top of the women's world rankings today after following up her Australian Open victory by beating Amanda Coetzer to win the Toray Pan Pacific Open in Tokyo. Hingis ensured her return to the No 1 position when she overcame Jana Novotna in the semi-final, easing 4-0 ahead in the first set at a cost of only four points. Coetzer managed to break back in the fifth and pushed to 2-4, but that was the extent of her resistance. Hingis stormed 5-0 ahead in the second set before calmly serving out for the match against a struggling Coetzer.

Jackson left furious

ATHLETICS: Colin Jackson criticised organisers after coming close to losing his 60 metres hurdles world indoor record in the Sparkassen Cup in Stuttgart yesterday because of the lack of electric false-starting equipment. Falk Bahrer made the most blatant of false starts before running a German record of 7.34sec — the second-fastest time in history after Jackson's 7.30sec in 1994. "I expected to hear the recall gun, but it never came," Jackson said. "I was robbed. After my heat, I honestly believed I could have got close to my world record."

Ovett strides to victory

BOWLS: Ollie Ovett, nephew of Steve, the former Olympic runner, was first past the post in the Manchester Unity All-England Under-25 championship at Nottingham. Ovett, who plays for the Brighton-based Preston club, reached the final with wins over Craig Cooper, Chris Young and Mike Bowley. In the final, he was on course for a comfortable win when he led Glenn Allen, from Isis, 10-8, but Allen squared the match at 16-16 before Ovett won with two singles and a treble.

Spacey sparks Arsenal

FOOTBALL: Arsenal, the holders, advanced to the sixth round of the women's AXA FA Cup after defeating Everton 1-0 at Boreham Wood yesterday. Marianne Spacey scored the winning goal in the 75th minute. Croydon, the winners in 1996 and runners-up last year, were indebted to Carly Hunt, who scored a fine winning goal in the 65th minute against Millwall Lionesses, her former club.

London win at Wycliffe

ROWING: London University won all three open classes at the Wycliffe Head on the Gloucestershire Sharpness Canal on Saturday, and Shrewsbury School took the lion's share of the junior divisions. Oxford University's lightweight women were impressive winners of eight winners and Wycliffe's top boys' and girls' quads both won their divisions.

BASKETBALL

Finch fury as Sharks bite back

By NICHOLAS HARLING

THE hard-earned victory that took Sheffield Sharks back to the top of the Budweiser League yesterday did little to placate Chris Finch, their coach, who still came off court at the Sheffield Arena raging at Roger Harrison and Mac Callender, the officials, after the Sharks had overcome Leicester Riders 80-71.

Surprisingly, it was not so much the technical offence that he incurred in the first half that concerned Finch, but a late, academic call when the result was secure. Harrison, who took the brunt of Finch's fury, had earlier penalised him for swearing, apparently because it was in front of the table officials. "Why that should be an issue, I don't know," Finch said.

The four subsequent free throws from Jarón Boone, another from Eric Moore and a Garnet Gayle three-pointer enabled the Riders to complete an 18-3 burst that shook abruptly the Sharks out of their complacency. Histally of 28 points enabled the Sharks to go in level at 43-43 at half-time.

Mark Hawley then scored five swift points before a trio of three-pointers, from Ian McKinney, and one apiece from Michael Payne and the excellent Todd Cauthorn formed the bulk of Sheffield's decisive 19-5 rally.

Watched by Finch, Manchester Giants had kept the title issue alive by defeating the Leopards 80-78 the previous evening.

SNOOKER

In-form Williams begins title defence in fine style

By PHIL YATES

going to come to an end sometime, but I'm just determined to enjoy myself while it lasts." Williams, now unbeaten in 16 successive matches, said, Stephen Lee, the Grand

Prix champion, and Alan McManus, winner of the Masters in 1994, meet this morning for the right to provide the next opposition for Williams, who edged Stephen Hendry 10-9 on a resplendent black in the final last year.

James Wattana continued to heal psychological wounds inflicted at the Asian Games in December by performing fluently in his 6-2 victory over David Gray, a Wembley debutant, in the first round.

Wattana reached the nadir of his career so far when he lost to Chan Kwok-wing, of Hong Kong, in the first round of the Games in his native Bangkok, when he was expected to win a gold medal for Thailand.

"After that, I wanted to take a year off, maybe two, but I knew it was impossible," Wattana said. "This game is my life and my living."

RUGBY LEAGUE

Widnes run Rams ragged

Widnes Vikings 30
Dewsbury Rams 12

By PETER WILSON

DEWSBURY RAMS, the 41 second favourites for the first Ford Northern Premiership title, were left to wonder whether the bookmakers had done their homework after this defeat by an enthusiastic Widnes Vikings outfit.

Solid defence restricted a disappointing Dewsbury attack and excellent handling by Fabien Devicchi, Widnes's French international half back, and Paul Mansson, his partner, caused havoc.

Widnes, with experienced newcomers, looked a far more ambitious side than the one who struggled a year ago. Much of the damage was done during an impressive first half, when they established an

18-2 lead. The first try came from Lokeni Savello, the second-row forward, after a pass from the impressive Mansson before the same player put in Devicchi. Further tries from James Briers and Mansson completed the scoring for Widnes, with Dewsbury replying through Alex Godfrey and Billy Kershaw.

SCORERS: Widnes: Tries: Savello, Devicchi, Briers, Mansson. Goals: Salisbury (7). Dewsbury: Tries: Godfrey, Kershaw. Goals: Eaton (2).

ICE HOCKEY

Storm rise again to the top

By A CORRESPONDENT

MANCHESTER Storm turned the Sekonda Superleague title race back in their favour with a hard-fought 3-1 win over Cardiff, who had taken over at the top just 24 hours previously.

Storm regained their place at the top with third-period goals by Jeff Jablonski, his second of the night, and Stefan Ketola, to end the Devils' eight-game winning streak.

Storm took an eighth-minute lead through Jablonski, but the Cardiff pressure told when Merv Priest equalised. It was anybody's game until Jablonski struck after 46 minutes and when Cardiff withdrew Herlofsky to throw on an extra attacker, Ketola broke away to score.

The Devils had displaced Storm as leaders for the first time since October 31 when they beat Newcastle Riverkings 4-3 in overtime while Storm, playing their fourth away game on the run, slumped to their third defeat in that testing series.

Ketola's sixth-minute power-play goal gave them an advantage that they did not lose until Paxton Schulte equalised 31 minutes later. They then went 3-1 behind to goals by Greg Burke and Mikhail Nemirovsky and although Blair Scott replied from another power play, Colin Ward's shot into an empty net settled the outcome.

Nottingham Panthers kept their remote title hopes alive with a 3-0 win over Sheffield Steelers.

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FA Carling Premiership: Injury-weakened pacesetters struck down by altitude sickness

Anderton shows off his new self-belief

GLENN HODDLES' halo may have slipped but the influence of Eileen Drewery, his faith healer, remains. Supporters of Tottenham Hotspur should not scoff — her hands perhaps hold the key to the continuing good health of Darren Anderton, the England and Spurs midfielder player.

Anderton frequently visits Drewery and will not be deterred, despite the adverse publicity that she has received in the past week. The player formerly known as "Sicknote" has played in 28 of Tottenham's 33 fixtures this season, compared with 39 in the previous three league campaigns.

Proof of Drewery's powers

	TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR	0
	COVENTRY CITY	0

by Russell Kempson

or mere coincidence? George Graham, the Tottenham manager, is not sure. "I don't know who should take the credit, her or me?" he said, tongue firmly in cheek.

Anderton led a rousing display, pouring scorn on those who still point to his fragility with a vigorous contribution against a Coventry City side bristling with commitment.

His skidding 25-yard shot shaved a post in the thirteenth minute and set a monotonic and almost monotonous flow that persisted throughout. Tottenham attacked, missed chances and then regrouped; Coventry defended, slung the ball forward for Huckerby to chase and then retreated.



Ferdinand headed wide. Nielsen misjudged Anderton's cross. Freund drove over the crossbar. Ferdinand erred again and Sinton struck the bar. All in the first half. In the second, Ferdinand shot wide. Iversen scooped over from four yards and Nielsen miscued Anderton's cross. Still, they extended their unbeaten run to ten matches and Graham was reasonably satisfied. "It's coming together nice and slowly," he said.

Coventry could take only crumbs of comfort but will be happy with the belated introduction of Mohammed Konjic, the Bosnia defender, who signed from AS Monaco for £2 million. "He's a big lad and not bad, either," Gordon Strachan, the Coventry manager, said. "I wouldn't like to clean out his cage."

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR (4-4-2): 1. Walker — S. Carr, L. Young, S. Campbell, M. Tappin (sub: T. Sherwood, B. Brown) — D. Anderton, A. Hebest, S. F. Brown, A. Selton — S. L. Johnson (sub: C. Armstrong, 70), L. Ferdinand.

COVENTRY CITY (4-4-2): M. Hodgson — R. Hanson, R. Shaw, P. Williams (sub: M. Kelly, 53), G. Brown (sub: J. A. Jones, 50) — P. Taylor, G. Jackson, T. S. Sinton (sub: P. Clement, 70), S. F. Brown — D. Huckerby, W. Iversen. Referee: S. Lodge.

Villa unable to run on empty

	ASTON VILLA	1
	BLACKBURN ROVERS	3

by Rob Hughes

IN THE street outside Villa Park, a man was trying to sell a derelict VW Beetle with its headlights ripped out. "It's a great engine," said the Brummie Arthur Daley, "all she needs is a bit of renovation." Inside the stadium, the cost of renovation was plain to see.

Blackburn Rovers, having spent £15 million in two months to rise off the bottom where they never should have been, convincingly beat Aston Villa, who failed to lure Juninho from Atletico Madrid for £12 million and £50,000 a week. And for want of such a creator, Villa's challenge for the championship is running out of engine power.

John Gregory, Villa's genuine young manager, allowed himself to say: "I'm a bit envious of Brian Kidd, who can go out and buy four players on the belt. He has the benefactor, but I'm not complaining. It comes down to how good a manager you are."

A manager is no better than his resources and Villa, deeply wounded by the stressed ego of Stan Collymore, had to field Dion Dublin, Steve Watson and Gareth Southgate with palpably painful real injuries and rely on apprentices on the bench. The effort of leading the FA Carling Premiership has clearly sapped the 17-year-old Gareth Barry and run Lee Hendrie into the ground.

Yet Villa Park, the foundation stone of league football, still throbs with potential power. The crowd on Saturday contained men who have supported the claret and blues for three score years and ten, and included five-month-old Robert Lally, whose great-grandfather, Harry Cooch, once played and coached the Villa. The club



Oakes, the Aston Villa goalkeeper, cuts a dejected figure as Ward, with arm upraised, celebrates his successful strike. Photograph: David Jones

that you choose is a club for life, a faith that may be lost on the moguls now tearing at the fabric of the higher echelons of the game.

Villa are finding the championship cannot be won by Englishmen alone, nor is it likely with a chairman who is such a modest millionaire. Doug Ellis, modest? Of course not, but his millions are, by comparison to those of Jack Walker, at Blackburn, never mind the resources that drive Manchester United and Arsenal or sustain the astonishing wages-gamble at Chelsea.

Villa have had to run too hard to make the pace at the top, and are paying for it. It is cruel indeed when your skipper, after an immaculate half-hour of commanding the side

from the back, scores an own goal. Southgate, who has virtually surrendered his England place to push his injured hip for Villa, went for an innocuous cross from David Dunn and headed the ball in a gentle, almost mocking arc, over Michael Oakes, his stranded goalkeeper. It was the first own goal of his career.

Someone else who ought to figure for England, Chris Sutton, then harassed Villa into certain defeat. Back after injury and suspension, he was masterful in holding the ball, turning the defence, in heading and running power. He wrestled possession away from Riccardo Scimeca and, with careful aim, presented Ashley Ward with the second Rovers' goal. When Scimeca

was beaten again, outpooled and outfoxed by the tricky Man Jansen, the move led to a third goal, volleyed in by Dunn. All three strikes were faced with Villa error.

At the other end, Flan was

Jewell's shining lights.....31
Results and tables.....32

at full stretch to deny Joachim, Dublin and Alan Thompson, a substitute, though Joachim eventually scored a splendid consolation goal and Grayson missed from six yards, but this was evidence more of Villa's stout heart than any championship pretension.

Blackburn are too good to be where they are, and Kidd's

will claim casualties — attempting to win a championship that will, in any case, be Manchester United's, Arsenal's or Chelsea's?

This time, *Deadly Doug* may be right to restrain his young manager. And who knows, Stanley may give a hand. "Collymore? Please, don't ask me to waste my time talking about somebody who isn't here," Gregory said. "Ask him... if you can find him." The car without headlights, indeed.


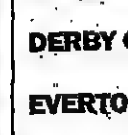
Now that Villa's impetus has stalled, the blame is being heaped on Ellis, whose caution is deemed to be holding back Gregory's need for recruits. But should the chairman risk bankrupting Villa — and make no mistake, the rising transfer fees and wages

start in management suggests a very appreciable talent for the job. He will go to the board this week determined to prevent Tim Flowers, his England goalkeeper, being granted a transfer, because Kidd has the money, the backing and the good sense to know that he needs to hold onto his two good goalkeepers.

"I'm building long term," he said, "and for that you need competition for all places." That, of course, costs.

Now that Villa's impetus has stalled, the blame is being heaped on Ellis, whose caution is deemed to be holding back Gregory's need for recruits. But should the chairman risk bankrupting Villa — and make no mistake, the rising transfer fees and wages

Burton points Derby in right direction

	DERBY COUNTY	2
	EVERTON	1

By Kevin McCarra

IF reputations are hard to win, they can be even harder to retain. Derby County, sixth in the table, remain aspirants towards a Uefa Cup place, but it took Dean Burton's second goal, in the 85th minute, to win a game in which they had been behind. If Jim Smith's side are establishing themselves, Everton are becoming stuck and, fourth from bottom, face months of relegation skirmishes.

The difference between the clubs was not apparent for much of the match, although Derby were persistent after the interval. The mystic of fate were encapsulated in the form of Burton. In December he was on loan to Barnsley, who, not entirely jokingly, were said to be eager to buy him after his first appearance and just as keen to return him after the next.

But with three goals in the past three fixtures that he has started, there has been a quicksilver change in the previously inconsistent Jamaican.

That knack for transformation eludes Everton. The only alterations took place against their wishes, when David Unsworth had to be replaced because of a calf strain and reorganisation diminished their resilience in defence.

Until then, Everton were prospering. Their reputation for penalty-box harmlessness is left behind when they leave Goodison. In the 37th minute, Olivier Dacourt found Francis Jeffers, the teenager who was making his first full appearance for the club. The young forward then placed it uncharacteristically into the path of Nick Barmby, who finished with a smart shot.

Given their rigour in defence and speed on the break, it seemed that Walter Smith's side might flourish. Derby, then, were too elaborate and only in the second half did they harass the visitors. After 51 minutes, Franco Balzano released Paulo Wanchope and, when he crossed, Richard Dunne was lying on the ground, having lost his balance when Burton brushed against him. The Jamaican glided an awkward, bouncing ball into the net.

"Burton is having a taste of

Middlesbrough seek early-season sparkle



Ince celebrates after scoring Liverpool's third goal


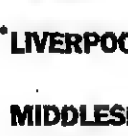
PERHAPS it is time to jog the memory. Middlesbrough enjoyed a spirited start to the season. They could win at Old Trafford and feel unlucky not to take all three points from Highbury. But right now, there is an aura of the underdog — almost of the willing victim — about them.

This was apparent in how the team played and how their manager spoke. Middlesbrough plodded through this match in the style of an elderly librarian, who once dreamed of being an actor and used to attend premieres sporting a purple velvet bowtie, but who now smiles ruefully as he stamps another book.

the game in fatalistic fashion, having identified, the day before, the FA Carling Premiership match against Everton on Wednesday as the one in which Middlesbrough must start winning again.

Hopes of victory were not dashed, because it seems there were none present in the first place. Instead, Robson said he was pleased with the performance, that he was not as disappointed as he had been after Middlesbrough's two previous defeats.

Gerard Houllier, like Robson, has been linked with the job of England manager. Neither are interested, but if they had been up for an interview on Saturday, Houllier would

	LIVERPOOL	3
	MIDDLESBROUGH	1

by Alyson Rudd

have been offered the post. For if attitude wins games, only one team were in it.

Liverpool were sluggish at times and no one will be rushing to buy the video of this match, but they possessed

both the will to win and the knowledge that they would. All three of the home side's goals came in the first half.

First, Redknapp's corner was headed down by Ince, somewhat clumsily, but Fowler reacted swiftly with an overhead kick that Owen pounced on. Redknapp set up the second, too, weaving his way to the edge of the area before releasing Bjorneby, whose cross was met by Heggem, prancing like a lamb, for a superb volley.

McManaman, Owen and Ince combined neatly for the third. Ince finishing with as much craft as Owen would have displayed.

Although Liverpool conced-

ed a goal in the second half — a fine volley from Stamp from an acute angle — Houllier again won on points.

When Matheo was sent off in the 64th minute, Houllier kept his nerve. So many managers overreact to a red card. They quickly make reckless substitutions, but Houllier simply allowed those players used to Middlesbrough's pedestrian ways to adapt, rather than introduce uncertainty.

LIVERPOOL (3-5-2): D. James — J. Carragher, D. Maitland, S. Staunton — V. Heggem, S. McManaman, P. Ince, T. Redknapp, S. Barmby — M. Owen (S. Gerrard, 80), R. Fowler (K. Reddy, 80).

MIDDLESBROUGH (3-5-2): M. Schwarzer — C. Croser, S. Vickers, G. Preece — G. Fosta (P. Stamp, 61), R. Maitland, P. Gascoigne, A. Townsend (sub: N. Middleton, 72), D. Gordon — S. Dunne, M. Beck. Referee: P. Jones.

Carbone rises above the rest

DANNY WILSON was not going to talk about Paolo Di Canio. "I am not going to talk about Paolo Di Canio," he said. The words Paolo, Di and Canio were banned, not to be mentioned. That subject was closed, shut, finished, finito. No amount of wheedling was going to get him to drop his guard.

You could hardly blame him. The Sheffield Wednesday manager must be sick to death of talking about the eccentric Italian, the referee-pushing, emotionally tortured striker, who has dominated the season so far at Hillsborough, even though he last played for the club in September.

Di Canio this, Di Canio that, Paolo in Rome, Paolo is coming back, no he isn't, yes he is, no, yes, maybe. He is joining West Ham United, he is going, going, gone. Thank heavens for that, the season

	LEICESTER CITY	0
	SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY	2

by Peter Robinson

starts here. So one and all chatted aimlessly for a few minutes, then there was one last, ever so sweet: "Can we say that, since a certain person has left, it has helped his former striking partner to find his best form?"

Wilson jumped in with both feet. "If anybody has benefited from the whole scenario, it is Benito Carbone," he said. "He has been magnificent, he is

happy and he is addressing the other side of his game, working hard when he has not got the ball."

When Di Canio was at the club, it was easy to imagine the two Italians sitting in a corner of the dressing-room, gabbling away in their native tongue. Now, with Di Canio gone, Carbone appears to have taken stock of where he is. Suddenly, he is loving life in south Yorkshire, a new four-year contract is on the table and he will sign it.

This win was convincing, but if Carbone earned most of the plaudits, he was simply the icing on the cake. Des Walker was masterful at the back. Wim Jonk dominated the midfield and Peter Rudi had fun on the left wing.

Leicester seemed almost disinterested. After Hinckley denied Izzet on the goal line, they had barely a shot worth

the name. Wednesday had to wait until the start of the second half to take the lead. Jonk heading in from close range after a mistake by Keller. He was involved in the second goal, too, starting a move inside the Wednesday half and, as Alexanderson crossed, selling a sweet dummy that gave Carbone the chance to drive in from the edge of the area.

It was a goal fit to win any game, Wilson said, and he was right. Whether the teamwork that went into it would have been present if a certain person was still at the club was a moot point.



LEICESTER CITY (4-4-2): K. Keller — M. Elliott, G. Taggart (sub: P. Gurnaghan, 66), S. Morris (sub: T. Foster, 50) — A. Timney (sub: T. Morgan, 70), M. Toner (sub: M. Williams, 50), S. Guppy — A. Carr (sub: E. Hetherington, 70).

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY (4-4-2): P. Rudi — P. Rotherham, S. Morris, D. Jones, D. Somers, P. Rudi — S. Carbone, A. Booth. Referee: G. Ward.

Solano takes opportunity to rattle O'Leary's babies

DAVID O'LEARY calls them "my babies", which, on a line through George Graham, gives Howard Wilkinson a group of great-grandchildren that anyone would be proud of. Maybe one day he will invite one or two of them over for a kachibou in his back garden at Wembley. But when Wilkinson leads England's grown-ups into action against France there on Wednesday, the little 'uns should be tucked up in bed.

No one can doubt the richness of Wilkinson's legacy to Leeds United. Seven graduates from the academy that he established at Elland Road have helped to give the team a youthful, exuberant zest this season and the likes of Alan Smith and Jonathon Woodgate, let off the reins by

	LEEDS UNITED	0
	NEWCASTLE UNITED	1

by Keith Pike

O'Leary, are clearly outstanding talents with international futures. But they are also desperately tired and just when O'Leary is keen to pack them upstairs for a mid-season nap, he finds himself having to keep them awake.

"You would like to leave a few out, because they are struggling, but I have no choice," the Leeds manager said on Saturday, when a home defeat by Newcastle United, seven days after a wholesale collapse at The Dell, confirmed suspicions of temporary teenage burn-out and relegated Leeds to sixth in the FA Carling Premiership. Defeat in the FA Cup next weekend by Tottenham Hotspur could reduce their season into a scramble for a Uefa Cup place.

Some of the young kids are tired, but I simply have nobody else to bring in," O'Leary said. "But they are talented players and in the next few years that quality will

show." Reinforcements, he said, could not be bought before the summer.

There were few signs of fatigue early on against Newcastle when, driven on by Bowyer — a relative veteran at 22 — Leeds' adrenaline rush had Ruud Gullit's side penned back. Wijnaldt nearly scored from Smith's cross, but once Newcastle sensed their opportunity and the tackles began to fly in, Leeds began to look their tender years.

Solano thundered a shot against Martyn's left-hand post and Ketsbaia failed dismally when one-on-one with the goalkeeper to beat, but just after the hour Ketsbaia, Hamann and Solano exchanged passes on the right, the ball broke kindly from Woodgate's tackle and Solano pounced for the winner.

Sexy it wasn't, although Gullit was titillated. "The players want to know if you are going to ask about a rift in the camp again," the Newcastle manager, peeved by recent rumours regarding his relationship with his squad, said. "Our team spirit is our strength." Of flair, though, there is still precious little evidence.

LEEDS UNITED (4-3-3): N. Martyn — J. Hamann, G. Woodgate, L. Riecke, D. Gurney (sub: G. Halls, 66) — A. Smith, C. Bowyer, D. Hopper — A. Smith, C. Bowyer (sub: V. Konstantin, 66), H. Hogg (sub: M. Ward, 60), L. Salmons (sub: A. Galloway, 50), L. Salmons (sub: A. Galloway, 50), L. Salmons (sub: A. Galloway, 50). Referee: U. Rennie.



Barmby gave Everton a boost with opening goal

success," Smith, the Derby manager, said, "and I hope he will work even harder now to become better." Five minutes from time, Dorjog crossed and Wanchope pounded a header that Thomas Myrte, the goalkeeper, did well to thrust into the air. Burton was able to run at the ball and outjump bigger opponents to head home.

The satisfaction of Derby, after a mere two defeats in 13 matches, is tempered only by the fact that they lost Wanchope with an injured hamstring and expect to be without him for the FA Cup-tie at Huddersfield Town next weekend, though Dean Sturridge is expected to be fit by then.

There are no consolations for Everton, who are now without a win in their past seven matches. Barmby did give them their first goal in more than five hours of Premiership football, but that is a fact for statisticians rather than solace for supporters.

DERBY COUNTY (3-4-1-2): R. Hoyt — S. Prie, H. Carlsson, J. Smith — J. Leeson (sub: D. Powell, 76), L. Corbett, S. Egan — A. Dorjog — P. Barmby (sub: K. Harper, 70) — P. Wernche (sub: J. Hart, 68), D. Burton (sub: V. Konstantin, 66), H. Hogg (sub: M. Ward, 60), L. Salmons (sub: A. Galloway, 50), L. Salmons (sub: A. Galloway, 50). Referee: G. Pott.

Photograph, page 32.

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1/2-1-0 1/2-1-0 1/2-1-0	CHARLTON 0-0 WIMBLEDON 1/2	1/2-1-0 EKOKU (W)	
1/2-1-0 1/2-1-0 1/2-1-0	CHARLTON 0-0 WIMBLEDON 2/1	1/2-1-0 MENDONCA (C)	
1/2-1-0 1/2-1-0 1/2-1-0	DRAW 0-0 WIMBLEDON 6/1	1/2-1-0 GAYLE (W)	
1/2-1-0 1/2-1-0 1/2-1-0	DRAW 0-0 WIMBLEDON 7/2	1/2-1-0 EARLE (W)	
1/2-1-0 1/2-1-0 1/2-1-0	DRAW 0-0 WIMBLEDON 5/1	1/2-1-0 KINSLEY (C)	
1/2-1-0 1/2-1-0 1/2-1-0	WIMBLEDON 0-0 WIMBLEDON 2/1	1/2-1-0 ARDLEY (W)	
1/2-1-0 1/2-1-0 1/2-1-0	WIMBLEDON 0-0 WIMBLEDON 1/2	1/2-1-0 NEWTON (C)	
1/2-1-0 1/2-1-0 1/2-1-0	WIMBLEDON 0-0 WIMBLEDON 3/1	1/2-1-0 NO GOALSCORER	

FA Carling Premiership: Ferguson's four-goal reserve proves there is no substitute for class

Lethal Solskjaer treasures his pieces of eight

NOT since a shaft of light illuminated the face of Harry Line in a Viennese doorway has anyone played the Third Man with quite the same conviction as Ole Gunnar Solskjaer. Consigned again to the cameo role that has become his lot, Manchester United's own version of a cold-blooded assassin galloped the big picture in the victory over Nottingham Forest at the City Ground on Saturday and made sure that he was the star of the show.

There were times this season when Solskjaer was almost forgotten in the touchy-feely love-in that the explosive partnership between Dwight Yorke and Andy Cole has become. Cole and Yorke eat together, go out together, listen to music together. And they score together. As strikers they were made for each other.

As they have prospered, setting Europe and the FA Carling Premiership alight with the telegraphic play that was best illustrated in Cole's goal against Barcelona in the Nou Camp at the end of November, Solskjaer has laboured in their shadows. Yorke and Cole, quite rightly, have been showered with adulation and hyperbole.

Until a couple of weeks ago, the thought of splitting them seemed as sacrilegious as separating Torvill and Dean. Redgrave and Holmes or Clough and Taylor. It felt as if it would have been going against nature, spoiling something so right, trying to fix something that quite definitely was not broken.

Solskjaer, though, has



changed that. He was linked with £5 million moves to Everton and Tottenham Hotspur early in the season, but Alex Ferguson, the United manager, wanted him to stay and Solskjaer did not really want to go. The Norwegian has vindicated that decision by scoring 15 goals, many after coming off the bench. Somehow, he has managed to force himself into fourth place in the ranks of Premiership scorers. Only Yorke, Michael Owen and Cole have more.

Even on Saturday, when Cole and Yorke had joined once more in a goalscoring competition that is becoming a bit like the American baseball home-run race last summer, Solskjaer refused to accept second billing. Cole and Yorke had scored two each and United were in cruise control, but still he refused to be outdone.

Unhappy at the lack of opportunities he is being given in his third season at Old Trafford after his move from Molde, he came on in the 72nd minute and promptly scored four goals in 13 minutes. Ferguson promised that Solskjaer

would start their FA Cup fifth-round tie against Fulham next Sunday and Yorke, who had given way to him, looked almost crestfallen when he discussed his contribution.

"One of the reasons I wanted to go to Manchester United was that there was competition all through the squad," Yorke said. "You have got to be on your toes all the time. You need good players to make you better. You would think Andy Cole and I had done all we needed to this afternoon, but then Ole comes on and scores four. You need that kind of competition when you are as heavily involved in as many games as we are. It's beautiful when you think about it. It is lovely."

There were only 18 minutes left when Solskjaer came on, only ten to go when he scored his first, a tap-in from a precise cross by Gary Neville. Two minutes before full-time he got a second, lashing his shot into the roof of the net from the edge of the area after Dave Beasant had parried his initial attempt to lob the goalkeeper.

A run and pass from Paul Scholes set up his hat-trick and, on the stroke of full-time, a Scholes miskick landed at his feet and he dispatched it nonchalantly across Beasant into the far corner. He had scored four goals in the space of 13 minutes, although the record books will say ten minutes because two were in injury time. Never has a substitute scored so prodigiously.

The victory set a record for a United away win, eclipsing the 8-2 FA Cup win over Northampton Town in 1970, in which George Best scored six times. Solskjaer looked almost embarrassed as he collected the match ball and fled the stadium without a word to reporters or waiting television crews.

Ferguson was happy to do his talking for him. "Amazing", "fantastic" and "marvellous" were just three of the words he used. "He is a finisher," he said. "There is no question about that. We have tried playing him out on the left, but he is better as a central striker. That is where he prefers to play."

"His contribution has been terrific all season, but he wants more minutes on the



Solskjaer, left, is congratulated by Beckham after scoring the third of his four goals against Nottingham Forest

pitch as well as the goals. He realises he is up against two fantastic in-form strikers and he accepts that, but he has great ability to adapt to the pace of a game as a sub."

If Solskjaer grabbed the headlines, David Beckham deserved much of the credit for being the architect of many of the goals. Beckham, keen to impress the watching Howard Wilkinson, was superb. His range of passing was breathtaking, his accuracy unwavering, his temperament unquestionable. Time and again he unlocked the Forest defence with raking long balls that were nectar for the forwards.

Forest's naivety in defence had allowed Yorke and Cole to put United in control long before Solskjaer appeared. For the home side, it was a harsh lesson about life at the bottom and Ron Atkinson was blunt in his analysis. "We were battered, spanked, murdered," he said. "I'm just glad they didn't put Solskjaer on earlier."

NOTTINGHAM FOREST (4-4-2): D Beasant — J. Hinds, C. Palmer, J. Hinds, C. Armstrong (subs: H. Parry, 74min) — S. Smith, S. Gerrard (sub: J. Morrison, 69), Johnson, A. Rogers — Paul Hodge (sub: J. C. Derchewski, sub: D. Freeman, 20). MANCHESTER UNITED (4-4-2): S. Scholes — G. Neville, J. Smith, R. Johnson, P. Neville — D. Beckham, R. Keane (subs: J. Carr, 72, P. Scholes, J. Brown, 89, J. Butt, 76) — A. Cole, D. Yorke (sub: O. Solskjaer, 72). Referee: P. Alcock.

SETTING THE GOAL STANDARD THE TEN BIGGEST PREMIERSHIP VICTORIES			
March 3, 1998	Manchester United 9	Ipswich Town 0	
FEBRUARY 6, 1999	Nottingham Forest 4	Manchester United 8*	
November 18, 1998	Blackburn Rovers 7	Nottingham Forest 0	
October 23, 1997	Manchester United 7	Barnsley 0	
April 4, 1998	Sheff Wednesday 1	Nottingham Forest 7	
October 8, 1992	Blackburn Rovers 7	Norwich City 1	
March 12, 1994	Newcastle United 7	Swindon Town 1	
February 11, 1993	Aston Villa 7	Wimbledon 1	
November 18, 1998	Everton 7	Southampton 1	
December 28, 1996	Newcastle United 7	Tottenham Hotspur 1	

* United have scored 92 goals in all competitions this season and boast three of the four top goalscorers in the Premiership — only Michael Owen with 19 for Liverpool splits them.

Dwight Yorke: 21 goals from 26 full appearances.

Andy Cole: 17 goals from 23 full appearances and 4 as a substitute.

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer: 15 goals from 10 full appearances and 11 as a sub.

Goalkeepers: 19 goals from 10 full appearances and 11 as a sub.

Referee: P. Alcock.



Yorke, left, and Cole scored two goals apiece, only to be upstaged by their Manchester United team-mate

Alyson Rudd
Two clubs and two headaches
Wimbledon have been kept so busy in both cups that their supporters have all but boycotted the trip to The Valley, taking up only half their ticket allocation. Charlton Athletic's pain is more severe — one point from their past nine games and no win from 13. They are without Richard Rufus (broken arm) but Danny Mills returns from suspension. Joe Kinnear, the Wimbledon manager, has had almost a full week in which to re-energise his troops after their FA Cup defeat by Tottenham Hotspur.

CHARLTON (possible 4-4-2): S. Royce — D. Mills, E. Younis, S. Brown, C. Tier — C. Powell, M. Kinsella, N. Redburn, J. Robinson — A. Hunt, M. Pringle.

WIMBLEDON (possible 4-4-2): N. Sullivan — S. Thatcher, D. Blackburn, C. Pies — A. Kinsella — N. Jolley, A. Roberts, R. Pate, J. Ewell — C. Leckham, J. Harrison.

Referee: D. Elbery.

TELEVISION: Sky Sports One 7pm.

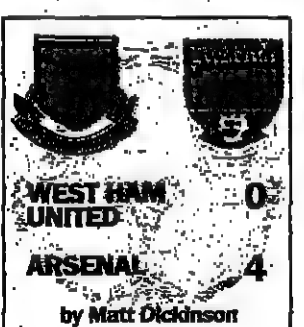
PREDICTIONS: Away win.

Bergkamp keeps Arsenal firmly in hunt

UNLESS Michael Owen equals the 73 goals that he once scored in a rather productive season as the terror of schoolboy defences, the Footballer of the Year trophy seems destined to end up in foreign hands. Doesn't it always?

Dwight Yorke, as he does for Manchester United, leads the way, and David Ginola, the Tottenham Hotspur winger, is the roaming outsider. But Emmanuel Petit and Patrick Vieira tap relentlessly at the voting senses, just as they did against a feeble West Ham United side who soon caved in. Marc-Vivien Foe, the midfield player whom Harry Redknapp, the West Ham manager, described as a monster, looked as if he had been hit by a truck.

If Petit and Vieira must surely figure high in the polling, what also of Dennis Bergkamp, the Footballer of the Year for the season 1997-98, whose marvellous goal on Saturday was not the only evidence that his best form is



WEST HAM UNITED 0
ARSENAL 4
by Matt Dickinson

returning. The Dutchman, in patches, was outstanding and the West Ham defence, unsure whether it was a back four or five, finished the game at sixes and sevens.

"For me, Dennis is the best attacking player in the Premiership," Arsene Wenger, the Arsenal manager, said. "He is the most complete forward. When he came back from the World Cup he needed a rest. Maybe I made a mistake by picking him to play when he was not really ready."

"It is the final ball that is the

difference. He is so influential in our attacking moves: we still dominate when he is missing, but lack the final touch."

Wenger's problem is that Bergkamp, as well as Petit, will be suspended when he takes his side to face Manchester United at Old Trafford for a game of momentous championship import on Wednesday week — the outcome of which will have a huge sway over the destiny of the title.

Trafford United by five points, albeit with a game in hand, Arsenal will feel it is a match that they cannot afford to lose, but the signs are good. Nine hours and 24 minutes of play have elapsed since the Arsenal rearguard last leaked a goal, and it never looked likely to happen against a West Ham attack for whom Di Canio appeared to be going for the world record for backflips rather than for goal.

Arsenal picked off their goals seemingly at will, and Seaman was troubled only by a couple of long-range shots

after the half-time introduction of Berkovic.

Arsenal should have been ahead from the 31st minute, when Overmars raced on to a incisive through ball by Bergkamp, but the first touch from Overmars was poor and his shot, after he had rounded his goalkeeper, was cleared off the line.

Three minutes later, Bergkamp decided to do it all himself — charging 40 yards

before striking a firm, low drive from outside the penalty area. Foe was booked for attempting to trip him.

Thereafter, Arsenal raised themselves when the mood took them. Overmars made it 2-0 shortly before half-time after a good break down the right by Parlour, but it was not until the 83rd minute that they punished West Ham again. Anelka scoring his first goal in the league since November. It

was a fine finish, but the teenager still seems to be at odds with himself and the world.

One Sunday newspaper attributed some outraged comments from him about a clash of personalities with Overmars, and if Wenger decides that they need to be kept apart, it is the France international who will make way. Nwankwo Kanu will be available as soon as he can prove his fitness.

Parlour completed things with a scrambled goal five minutes from time, and West Ham trooped off to an unpleasant inquest. Hopeful of staying in contention for Europe until just a month or so ago, they are now sliding towards the bottom half of the table. Redknapp must act quickly to stop the rot.

WEST HAM UNITED (4-4-2): S. Histo — T. Brackley (sub: E. Berwick, 45min), I. Pearce, R. Ferdinand, J. Dicks — T. Sinclair, F. Lampard, M. Foe, S. Merris — P. Di Canio, P. Kinnear.

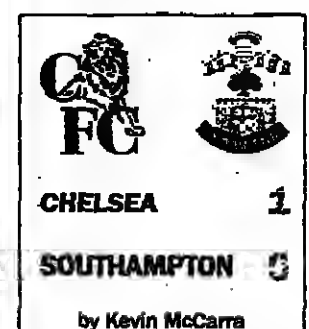
ARSENAL (4-4-2): D. Seaman — L. Dixon, T. Adams, M. Keown, N. Winterburn — R. Parlour, P. Vian, E. Petit, M. Overmars — D. Bergkamp, N. Anelka.

Referee: J. Winter.



Bergkamp opens the scoring for Arsenal at Upton Park

Zola fails to hide Chelsea's self-doubt



CHELSEA 1
SOUTHAMPTON 0
by Kevin McCarr

AS THE weather turned nasty on Saturday evening, two Chelsea supporters sat cradling their pints at a table outside a pub on the King's Road. They snubbed the conditions, paying them no attention at all. After the sort of match that they had undergone at Stamford Bridge, what was a little cold rain down their collars? It had been the sort of match to demoralise even the victors.

While watching Chelsea's wheezing win, one wondered how football became the world game. The only clue came in the craftsmanship of the free kick by Gianfranco Zola. In the eleventh minute, that decided the outcome. Although the firmness with which he steered the ball into the corner of the net was admirable, Southampton co-operated by misaligning their defensive wall. In this game, the highlight had its flaw and most episodes were disguised completely.

There was a weediness about the morale of his team. No one would kick sand in their faces, but rivals pelted Chelsea with the goals they were scoring elsewhere. When United and Arsenal run up 8-1 and 4-0 victories, respectively, away from home, there is a chastening effect on the other challengers.

In these situations, there are always handfuls of reasons to be grasped. Of their several injuries, the most harmful con-

Lynne Truss...33

cern Tore Andre Flo, who may be back in a week or two, and Gustavo Poyet, whose date of return is still to be determined.

Chelsea, especially missed their Uruguayan on Saturday as the visitors continually nudged them back, only lacking the necessary sharpness to carve the match into a different shape. Egil Osenstad drew a save from Ed de Goey when he could have passed to the unmarked Jim Beattie.

Mark Hughes, with four opportunities to demonstrate his trademark volley, botched three and lifted the other into the goalkeeper's hands. His return to his previous club ended in pain when he was carried off on a stretcher after Marcel Desailly caught him on the ankle with a bad foul that went unpunished.

That coarse deed felt like further evidence of a slump in standards. "Maybe we have lost a bit of confidence," Graham Rix, the Chelsea coach, said. "We are not as fluent as we can be." Self-doubt is an odd ailment for a side whose central defence is assembled out of two World Cup-winners, but anxiety will always be one of the ordeals for a club aspiring to the championship.

With Chelsea unwell, many spectators may wish that they had not intruded on their privacy by paying this visit.

CHELSEA (4-4-2): E. de Goey — D. Petrescu, M. Desailly, F. Labeou, G. Le Saer — D. Wise, J. Morris, R. D. Martinez, C. Bafoyan (sub: B. Goldson, 77min) — M. Forssell (sub: M. Nichols, 60), S. Zola.

SOUTHAMPTON (4-4-2): P. Jones — S. May (sub: W. Bridges, 60), J. Dods, C. Lundelam, P. Collins — M. Gahery, M. Hughes (sub: S. Bradley, 89), C. Marsden, H. Kachoud — J. Beattie, E. Osenstad.

Referee: R. Harris.

[illegible]

Nationwide League: Leaders regain form while Bradford underline promotion prospects

Jewell's collection upwardly mobile

Bradford City 2
Watford 0

BY STEPHEN WOOD

CULTURES are colliding at Bradford City. There remains evidence of an insular, but friendly club, aware of their importance for the local community. Then, there is the 21st-century Bradford City, out to impress the rest of the country. Few clubs in England would hold a minute's silence before kick-off for two supporters who had died recently, Geoffrey Richmond, the chairman, is an affable man who thinks nothing of instigating such a tribute. There are also few clubs in England where it takes three stewards to show members of the media to the press lounge.

Backed by Richmond's financial clout, Bradford are gearing up for the FA Carling Premiership. A place in the top flight has eluded them since 1922, so the achievement of promotion from the Nationwide League could not be overstated. They are in second place, eight points adrift of Sunderland, but recent form has been impressive and they dissected Watford so clinically that Graham Taylor, the visiting manager, said: "I would not have Sunderland as a certainty to win this league just yet."

Paul Jewell, the Liverpool-born manager of Bradford, relies on Scouse wit and as solid a 4-4-2 formation as you could wish to see. Richmond's willingness to spend has helped him to create a forward partnership that could be the best outside the Premiership. Mills was bought for £1 million from Port Vale, and Robbie Blake was acquired from Darlington for £350,000. Mills's goal after 64 minutes on Saturday took their combined total to 32 this season and the combination of his strength and Blake's skill is a pleasure to watch. There are



McCall, No 4, is congratulated by joyful team-mates after giving in-form Bradford City the lead after only nine minutes of the game against Watford on Saturday

clubs who would like to make them Premiership players now, but Jewell is adamant that they will stay. "No one is for sale at this club," he said. If Bradford do not go up, then multimillion-pound bids might test Jewell's resolve over the summer. It is vital, therefore, that Bradford seize this promotion opportunity for, as

Stuart McCall, their midfield player, can testify, they do not present themselves too often. McCall was in the side that could have gone up to the old first division in 1987. They held an automatic promotion place until the spring, were overtaken by Ipswich Town and then lost in the play-offs. Thereafter, he was sold to

Everton, but when his time at Rangers came to an end last summer, he moved back to Bradford to add valuable experience. He scored the opening goal on Saturday after eight minutes, a low drive from 25 yards, and said: "The difference between this season and 12 years ago is the money that the manager has got to spend."

"Last time, we had to succeed with a squad of 16, but now we are better-equipped and I hope we can go one step further. This team certainly knows only one way to play — we go for it home and away — but we'll have to wait and see whether it is the right approach."

The events of the past week

will have struck a chord with Taylor, the former England manager, more than most. He refused to talk about Glenn Hoddle, but it was not difficult to guess what he was feeling as he took his seat on the coach for the homeward journey. Watford probably will not be promoted this season, and they may even fail to make the

play-offs, but that does not mean that Taylor has been unsuccessful. BRADFORD CITY (4-4-2): K Mills — G Pugh, G Moore, A Lindgren — J Smith, C Foster (sub: S Tomlinson), H Mullins, J Fullerton — W Carlisle, M McKenzie (sub: S Evans, 89) — L Bradley. BIRMINGHAM CITY (4-4-2): K Poole — G Rowley, G Abbott (sub: M Granger, 23), M Johnson, S Chester — J McCarthy, S Robinson, M O'Connor, P McEvoy (sub: N Forster, 85) — D Aspinall (sub: B Hughes, 45), P Furlong. Referee: C Wilkie.

Clark in form despite rumours

Sunderland 2
Swindon Town 2

BY GEORGE CAULIN

IT may seem a little difficult to fathom, given their standing in the league table this morning, but Sunderland have just emerged, blinking in the sunlight, from their most traumatic episode since the harrowing fate that they suffered in the play-off final last May: a fortnight when allegations have been hurled, loyalty questioned and rebellion mooted.

That this period also encompassed a short golfing break, a Worthington Cup semi-final and the acquisition of another three points towards their inevitable promotion to the FA Carling Premiership, puts this "crisis" into perspective. Had Peter Reid's team contrived to slip up against Swindon Town on Saturday, it would have marked their fourth successive defeat. They did not, and so the storm clouds dissipate, even if a rumble of suppressed discontent remains.

This, after all, is Sunderland's year in limbo — sentenced to another twelve months treading water in the Nationwide League first division. For the fourteenth time at the Stadium of Light this season, Sunderland scored two or more goals. Again, they won and, at the end, Lee Clark, their midfield player, saluted the supporters for their patience and backing.

This was particularly poignant. Clark, who signed from Newcastle United for £2.75 million two years ago — has been at the heart of the rumours and dissent. There has been a public spat with Kevin Ball, his captain, about a minority of fans unhappy with his form since recovering from a broken foot. In turn, Clark is believed to be concerned at Reid's enduring failure to attract new signings, although the manager denies it.

Against Swindon, Clark was Sunderland's most accomplished performer, shooting against the crossbar in the dying moments. The goals came from Niall Quinn and Kevin Phillips, but Clark was in the background, prompting and prodding.

More than anyone, he represents the extent of Sunderland's recent transformation; young, gifted and black and white.

SUNDERLAND (4-4-2): T Eriksen — C Martin, A Marshall, P Butler, M Gray — N Summerbell, L Clark, K Ball, A Johnson (sub: M Budge, 88min) — N Quinn (sub: D Dicks, 88), K Phillips. SWINDON TOWN (3-5-2): F Tella — G Hall (sub: T Goodwin, 41), B Barrett, C Taylor — D Kendall, M Walters, S Howell, G Nisbet, S Davis (sub: M Robinson, 68) — C Hay, I O'Rourke (sub: C Griffin, 68). Referee: P Robinson.

Davison slip proves costly

Grimsby Town 0
Bolton Wanderers 1

BY PAT GIBSON

THIS was a rotten result for those who still dream that a little club like Grimsby Town can prove that football is not all about money and a place in the FA Carling Premiership. Perhaps we should join the Flat Earth society.

The contrast between these clubs could hardly be more stark. Grimsby are locked into their antiquated Broomfield Park ground on the banks of the Humber, which was packed close to capacity with a crowd of 8,674 on Saturday, while Bolton Wanderers, bankrolled by two executives into the Premiership in the past four years, lord it in their new Reebok Stadium.

Yet, for the best part of an hour, Grimsby, promoted

from the Nationwide League second division via the play-offs last season, completely outplayed their visitors, who retain the nucleus of the side relegated from the Premiership only on goal difference.

Then, nine minutes into the second half, Fransen hooked on a headed clearance from

Results and tables 32

Fish and Davison, Grimsby's Northern Ireland goalkeeper, made a complete hash of his punter. Holdsworth, a £3.5 million striker who could probably buy Grimsby with the money he has made from football, calmly dispatched his fourth goal in three matches to give Bolton their ninth win in a run of 13 league games without defeat.

Alan Buckley, the Grimsby manager, who had written in

the programme about "a league within a league" in the first division, where clubs like Bolton operate in a different sphere to his own, did not disguise his disappointment at the result.

"It is not sour grapes because we have lost," he said. "Bolton have had a terrific run of results, but we've been a far better side than them for most of the afternoon and to lose to a goal like that... frustrating is not the word."

Even Colin Todd, the Bolton manager, had to concede that his much-vaunted midfield had been outplayed for once.

GRIMSBY TOWN (4-4-1-1): A Davison — J McDermott, R Smith, P Hendricks, T Gault (sub: D Clark, 81min) — K Donovan (sub: M Lever, 82), S Cookson, K Black, P Groves, D Smith (sub: T Widdington, 87) — L Nugent. BOLTON WANDERERS (4-4-2): J Jackal — N Cox, M Fish, P Whitham (sub: R Elliot, 13), M Whelan — M Johnson, P Fransen, C Johnson (sub: R Gardner, 68), S Solari — D Holdsworth, S Taylor. Referee: W Burns.

Francis is reduced to silence

Crystal Palace 0
Birmingham City 1

BY NICK SZCZEPANIK

TREVOR FRANCIS, the Birmingham City manager, declined to attend the post-match press conference on Saturday. Perhaps he did not trust himself not to say something he might regret. More likely, there are some things that simply are too painful to talk about.

Whether he was more distressed by his team throwing away two precious points in stoppage time, or by a performance regarded by regular observers as one of their worst of the season, we may never know. But as it was widely accepted that Birmingham were fortunate to beat Bradford City six days earlier, with a penalty winner in the dying seconds, they should not really

complain that a freak own goal with virtually the last kick (and rebound) of the match denied them an undeserved win.

Things could be worse. For Steve Coppell, the Crystal Palace manager, they are already. A second home defeat of the season might have left a team forced to rely increasingly on their own young products looking nervously towards the foot of the Nationwide League first division. That is hardly Francis's problem. Birmingham, though dropping one place to fifth, stay in the play-off frame. They only reached half-time level thanks to Kevin Poole, the goalkeeper, who produced a strong save of the season candidate from Lee Bradbury's header and the crossbar, which repelled a flick from Gordon Petric.

The fates, or at least Clive Wilkes, the referee, were also on Birmingham's side when

Craig Moore was adjudged to have pulled back Paul Furlong early in the second half and Furlong converted the penalty.

With the seconds ticking away, Grainger and Rowett were unable to decide who should deal with a diagonal forward pass, with the result that the ball looped back over the stranded Poole and dropped in off the far post.

CRYSTAL PALACE (3-4-3-1): K Mills — G Pugh, G Moore, A Lindgren — J Smith, C Foster (sub: S Tomlinson), H Mullins, J Fullerton — W Carlisle, M McKenzie (sub: S Evans, 89) — L Bradley. BIRMINGHAM CITY (4-4-2): K Poole — G Rowley, G Abbott (sub: M Granger, 23), M Johnson, S Chester — J McCarthy, S Robinson, M O'Connor, P McEvoy (sub: N Forster, 85) — D Aspinall (sub: B Hughes, 45), P Furlong. Referee: C Wilkie.



Furlong penalty prize

Rapley doubles efforts to leave

Rotherham United 2
Southend United 2

BY MARTIN WOODS

NOT content with four goals, six bookings, one sending-off and enough on-loan strikers to convince Arthur Scargill that the best fantasy football is being played in his own south Yorkshire backyard, this match also provided a fight-back that was worthy of any football comic strip.

In this case, the hero was Kevin Rapley, the young Southend United striker who is on loan from Brentford, where he has been unable to convince Ron Noades, the owner-manager, of his value to the side.

When John Gregory, the Aston Villa manager, responded recently to Stan Collymore's *cris de coeur* about stress, he suggested that the millionaire's complaint would be more appropriate coming from a Nationwide League third-division player with a wife, kids, mortgage and three months left on his contract. He might have been describing Rapley, now filling Collymore's boots as leader of the Southend attack.

With three games left on his loan contract and desperate to escape Noades's jurisdiction, he capped a magnificent performance with two clinically taken goals to earn a point for Alvin Martin's side, which seemed highly unlikely when they went 2-0 down deep into

first-half injury time after having Neil Campbell, their other striker, sent off in the 39th minute for elbowing Dillon in the face. Ingledew and Warne had put the home team in the driving seat. "The two most important goals I have probably scored in my life," was how Rapley described his work.

ROTHERHAM UNITED (4-4-2): M Poole — V Warner (sub: C Sedgewick, 64min), A Knight, G Smith, P Hunt — J Ingledew, S Garner, S Thompson (sub: A Robinson, 46), P Dillon — J Jackson, P Warne. SOUTHEND UNITED (4-4-2): M Morgan — M Bead, R Newman, S Coleman, M Booth — K Maher, S Lyett (sub: S McGavin, 84), Gooding, S Houghton (sub: S Corrie, 68) — N Campbell, K Rapley. Referee: R Oliver.

Arrests as fans clash

THE Football Association will await police reports before deciding whether to take any action after trouble at the Nationwide League second division game between Manchester City and Millwall on Saturday.

Eight Millwall supporters and three City fans were arrested during the match at Maine Road — which City won 3-0 — after minor skirmishes between fans. All were charged with public order offences. There was also trouble inside the ground after the home side's opening goal, as seats were thrown.

Stoke wounded by ruthless Fletcher

Bournemouth 4
Stoke City 0

BY MIA WEBB

NOT SO much a mere fortress, more a full-scale exercise in utter impregnability, complete with moat, drawbridge and thick walls, that's Dean Court. Would-be conquerors should be wary, for if by chance they should show signs of penetrating the first line of defence and get beyond the portcullis, they could end up with a vat of boiling oil down

their necks. Stoke City tried it on Saturday, and ended up with third-degree burns.

This promise to be a tightly fought Nationwide League second division match between promotion contenders. In the event, it was not even a contest as Bournemouth, who have now played 19 times on their own ground this season without being beaten, snatched victory.

Bournemouth were forced to go into battle without Mark Stein, who has scored 23 goals this season, because of flu, but it made little difference. Steve Fletcher, who is negotiating a new contract with Bournemouth, responded with a performance of power and commitment that brought him two goals before half-time.

The game reached its nadir shortly before the interval when Kavanagh, Stoke's principal playmaker, and O'Neill were sent off after Kavanagh's ill-conceived tackle on Hughes brought swift retribution in the form of a forearm jolt from O'Neill.

With Kavanagh gone, Stoke were rendered even more sterile. Steve Robinson and James Hayer, a substitute, took full advantage, adding the third and fourth goals respectively.

APC Bournemouth (4-4-2): M Owen — N Young, I Cox, E Howe, J Vincent (sub: J Stephens, 70min) — J Bailey, S Budge, R Hughes, J O'Neill — R Bell (sub: C Warren, 27), sub: J Heyer, 66), S Fletcher. STOKES CITY (3-5-2): C Maggs — I Scourfield, P Robinson, S Woods (sub: R Forster, 59) — C Short (sub: R Wallace, 66), D Dicks, G Kavanagh, K Keen, B Small — D Crowe, M Macdonald (sub: K Lightbourne, 59). Referee: S Bonnot.

Leworthy revives dreams

Whitley 0
Kingstonian 3

BY WALTER GAMMIE

THE undiminished appetite for goals of David Leworthy turned an awkward FA Umbro Trophy fourth-round tie in Kingstonian's favour at Church Road on Saturday.

After a lacklustre first half display by the Nationwide Conference side and some pointed words from Geoff Chapple, the manager, the former Tottenham Hotspur and Reading striker, now 36, brought his special touch to bear in the 54th minute.

Smartly played in by Pitch-

er, Leworthy hooked the ball over two defenders and drove a fierce shot that Lidlbury could only help into his net. Two minutes later, darting forward, darting back, Leworthy made the space for Mustafa to find him with a perfect free kick that he headed in at the far post. He might easily have had a hat-trick, most notably when Paterson sent him clear, but he let the ball run away from him and was felled by Lidlbury.

Lee Richardson, the Whitley manager, had told his side of the threat from Leworthy, knowing that age serves only to sharpen the awareness of finishers of his calibre. Richardson's 20-year-old

striker, Scott and Dillon, will have learnt much from the outing. They gave Brown and Crossley an uncomfortable time but failed to make the most of their chances and a penalty, converted by Luckett, gave Kingstonian a flattering third goal.

Leworthy can dream of Wembley. "The only time I've played there is in the five-a-sides — at the Arena," he said.

WHITLEY (3-5-2): M Lushay — N Higgins, G Petre, G Elliot — D Agor, J Laid (sub: M Dodman, 72 min), N Golley, L Comstock, D McSherry (sub: B George, 64) — P Scott, I Dillon. KINGSTONIAN (3-5-2): S Fenally — W Brown (sub: M Lester, 80), M Crossley, M Hame — T Mustafa, S Corbett (sub: G Jewell, 89), G Patterson (sub: D Smith, 66), G Fletcher, C Luckett — D Leworthy, E Akumach. Referee: S Tomlin.

THE TIMES

"THE SPIRIT IN THE SQUAD'S GREAT."

Even if you're not top of the Fantasy League, you can still win £500 as Team of the Week or £1000 Manager of the month.

Funny old game isn't it?

CHANGING TIMES

Blue canvas from Benny Hill school of painting

The ancient Britons used to go into battle wearing nothing but blue paint, or wood. And so it was something of a return to our roots when the players in the Ireland-France rugby union match tried the same tactic on Saturday.

Well, they kept their shirts and shorts on, but they were all painted deep blue. It was one of the most bizarre sporting sights I have seen. Sport is an absurd pastime, one that forever trembles on the edge of farce. This match came close to falling over the edge and it is a tribute to a wonderfully dramatic game that it never quite happened.

Why don't sporting people ring me up before they make

decisions? I make no claims to exceptional perception, but I can see the obvious. And it strikes me as reasonably obvious that if you leave a load of wet paint on the ground and then get 30 fellows to roll about in it, they are going to get paint all over them.

The paint is there on the pitch to sell something. It always is. A good idea: all it does is spoil the actual sport and make the players look like cejts. But who cares about the players, or the audience? It is surely the sponsors that matter: them and nobody else.

It was wonderfully and absurdly distracting. Every time play went towards the blue bit, you tensed up: are they going to fall over and roll

about in it again? Soon the players had blue faces, blue arms, blue hair, blue shorts, blue jerseys. They sought to rub blue paint from their eyes with painty blue fingers.

Trainers had to run on to the pitch with towels to wipe off the blue. You wondered if the game would have to be stopped because all of the players had become indistinguishably blue. The more it rained, the painter it got.

And in the end, it was the rain that came to the rescue, falling so tumultuously that the players were washed in a few minutes from deepest Oxford to palest Cambridge. And we were free to bring our straying minds and giggling thoughts back to the action.



SIMON BARNES



PROGRAMME NOTES

But really, it was an instructive little episode in the story of sport and sports sponsorship. Saturday afternoon brought us an unholy alliance of greed and idiocy, with the actual sport taking second place in the calculations.

When that happens, the audience — watching for the sake of the sport, remember — takes against the interfering sponsor in a big way.

Sporting sponsors always remind me of the Benny Hill character, Fred Scuttle. Fred was always sliding into shot, trying to get on camera, no matter how little the story demanded his presence. The episode of the week was pure Fred Scuttle: it made sport look silly and the sponsor contemptible. I have decided, however, to keep quiet about the name of the sponsor and save

them from further ridicule. I will continue to do this so long as Lloyds TSB let me off the repayments on my present loan. Is that a deal, lads?

As the afternoon wore on and the paint wore off, a breathtaking game emerged, as if an expert picture-cleaner had been called in to reveal the painter's original intention, getting rid of the self-assertive retouchings of interfering daubers.

But really, why don't these sports people ring me up more often? No, Glenn, Michael Owen is a natural goalscorer, and while we're not on the subject, I'd keep your views on reincarnation to yourself. Alec, being captain and wicket-keeper and leading batsman is

a bit too much, you will exhaust yourself without winning anything. And look here, you Irish chaps: an international rugby team does rather need a proper goalkeeper.

But Ireland picked poor David Humphreys, who is not even a first-choice keeper for his club. Folly upon folly: television, sometimes more than live sport, can bring us that sense of dreadful inevitability. Every nuance of the Humphreys body language told us he was going to miss. And that was just his first pot at goal: by the time of the last, faithful hoof, it was all too much.

Nations always love to live up to the cliché images of themselves, and Ireland did this quite comprehensively. They

outplayed and outfought the French and still managed to lose. Even when they had thrown the game away, they had a chance to win it back with a late penalty.

And with dreadful inevitability, Humphreys whacked it wide. A splendid afternoon continued with the Scotland-Wales match: the latest Welsh revival lasted this time for 11 seconds: the time it took Scotland to sell them one of the oldest and cheapest plays in the rugby union playbook.

Great stuff. How would the Five Nations Championship have coped without England? England were not in action and the clear answer was: Jolly Well. A pity it can't cope without sponsors.

'Just when you think football might have a sensitive, arty side, you are disappointed'

Finns ain't what they used to be at Chelsea



Hughes was appreciative of Chelsea's goodwill before the game, but was shown very little during it

A touching ceremony took place before the match at Stamford Bridge on Saturday. Southampton's workhorse midfielder player, Mark "Sparky" Hughes, was presented with a crystal rosebowl by Colin Hutchinson, the Chelsea managing director, as a token of thanks from the club that he served for three years, bulldozing the opposition's defences.

I wiped a tear, of course, as the crowd acknowledged the occasion. Hughes held up his bowl for the crowd to cheer and I think we were all agreed, it was lovely to think of Hutchinson carrying along to Peter Jones in his lunch-hour and coddling his brains for the perfect gift. And then it came to him: "Well, if he's fond of flower arranging," the assistant said, "how about this?"

But just when you dare to think football might have its sensitive, arty side, you are always disappointed, as Hughes discovered. The match will not be remembered for the sparkle of its intricately chiselled facets, but for Michael Duberry's comment that, had it been played in his back garden, he would have drawn the curtains.

Aside from an eleventh-minute goal from a free kick by Zola, this was an absolute arse-kick of a match. The Southampton fans were obnoxious; the football was uninspired; and Hughes, poor chap, was so preoccupied by thoughts of contrasting foliage (or decorative catkins, or something) that he was felled by Marcel Desailly in the final minutes, and left to stare motionless at the grass. Not so much Sparky as spark out.

It was truly brutal and ugly — all of it. While elsewhere in the FA Carling Premiership, Arsenal and Manchester United were breaking records with exhibition goals, at Stamford Bridge we had to watch rubbish while Southampton fans sang gleefully: "Poyet, we broke his leg! Poyet, we broke his leg!"

Placed adjacent to the press box, the Dell boys were full of such banter and it was fascinating to discover how little escaped their laser-like intellects. Glenn Hoddle had been sacked, apparently. There was a woman in the press box. The Chelsea team were mostly foreign and, allegedly, open to homosexual advances.

Trust me, those reassuring rumours about football being

LYNNE TRUSS



middle-class all of a sudden have been cruelly exaggerated. However, while we wait for the yobs to take up tiddlywinks, I do have a modest proposal for something that can be done. The stewards at Stamford Bridge can be taken to the car park and, after a brief ceremony in which they hang their heads and remove their armbands, they can be shot.

I had come to Chelsea with other things in mind: to witness the crystal gleam of the 17-year-old Finn, Mikael Forssell, who worked such wonders in midweek against Oxford United by the style of his, er, finishing. What a treat for

anyone even halfway tolerant of puns. Just my luck, then, that on Saturday this was a finishing Finn who didn't quite get started.

To be fair, Dennis Wise had advised us in his programme note not to expect a repeat performance from young Mikael — "He's only a kid living in a foreign country" — but it was an unreasonable request. Doesn't football generally encourage shallow, callous responses? "A new Michael Owen?" we say. "Show me, I can't see one." Oh hang on, perhaps he's the new David Owen. Or the new Wilfred Owen. Ha, ha, ha. Anyway, when Forssell was substituted for Mark Nicholls after an hour, the game immediately got more interesting. Which is just the way it goes. I suppose, when you are a genuine superstar in the making.

Afterwards, it was possible to see a pattern and purpose in the game. This was small consolation, but better than none. Southampton had staunchly "taken the game to Chelsea", while Chelsea had uncharacteristically "dug in". Normally, Chelsea wouldn't get their hands dirty trying to win such a dreadful game; they would say "Oh fiddle-de-dee", and go shopping. But having briefly topped the Premiership table, they have pragmatically changed their priorities.

Not quite Arsenal in disguise, they were not very pretty and they didn't care. True, Ed De Geoy made his usual heart-stopping dashes from goal, but I have finally got the hang of these now and begin to see their value to the score-

line. "Off you go, Ed." I now cry, instead of "Eek." "That's right! That'll teach them to come into your half." And it works out very well. They tie him to his goalposts with elastic, you know. Two loops around the waist. This startled giraffe of a goalkeeper can then run 30 yards to the farthest stretch of the elastic, leap to punch the ball clear and be yanked back to his proper position. It's a bit like *Gladiators*, only without the paddles or the foam rubber.

Meanwhile, again in retrospect, Southampton's version of "taking the game to the opposition" meant mainly hard work and intimidation, and it wasn't bad at all. Hassan Kachoul, their new Moroccan player, is still giving them good value; and for reasons of solid effort, the whole team impressed in a way that Chelsea's individuals failed to do. I never forgot that Egil Olsenstad was playing, for example, whereas I frequently had to pinch myself to remember Roberto Di Matteo was on the park. Which was odd because he was wearing those over-the-knee socks of his, which generally — whisper it — thrill me to my very core.

So it was a draw-the-cur-tains match, truly. When they showed the highlights on *Match of the Day*, without hesitation I hid behind the sofa. It wasn't a question of commitment or "heart", simply a question of entertainment. When a man came into the press box and held up a note of the attendance figure (34,920), it was the highlight of the afternoon. By then we had stopped wanting to hear about the scoreline at Nottingham Forest or Upton Park. We made a note and gave a grateful thumbs-up. 34,920. Marvellous.

I expect it's only me that is worried about the rosebowl. But since Hughes was carried off unconscious from the pitch, you can't help wondering, did he remember to take it home? Did anyone? Much as one hates to accuse Chelsea of money-grubbing, it does look likely that they gave Hughes the rosebowl and then deliberately knocked him out so they could take it back on Monday.

If anyone sees Colin Hutchinson approaching customer services in Peter Jones with a big carrier-bag this week, perhaps they would write to let us know.



Forssell, Chelsea's young Finn, lost his midweek sparkle

SPORTS LETTERS

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E-mail, including a postal address and daytime telephone number, should be sent to: sport.letters@the-times.co.uk

RFU and the Five Nations

From Mr Richard Prescott
Sir, Gerald Davies is wrong to say (February 5) that the Rugby Football Union want to discontinue the Five Nations Championship. On the contrary we have gone on record many times in recent weeks to reiterate our commitment to the championship, and welcome the overdue addition of Italy to it. Our concerns were related to the Accord agreement signed in 1996, which we believe needs to be updated to acknowledge the addition of Italy. There are also a number of other issues we want clarified. An opportunity to discuss these will now take place with the Five Nations in the forthcoming weeks.

The television contract the RFU signed with Sky provided the game in England with vital revenue for all levels of the sport. I am sure Mr Davies would not begrudge the distribution of funds to junior clubs and youth development as a result of this deal.

As far as Europe is concerned the RFU want the clubs back in Europe and we will be vying down with them very shortly to discuss their future interest in the competition.

Finally, the Anglo-Welsh competition was streamlined

to the two unions for very straightforward reasons. Firstly, Ireland could not commit players into provincial sides in a British league for a whole season. Scotland are undergoing a review of their structure, which we understand will not be completed until May or June this year but the door remains open for their involvement in future seasons.

The proposal for five Welsh clubs covered the vast majority of their international players and the suggested structure was for one season with the potential for expansion in the following years. Although the RFU and English first division clubs are happy to discuss any further points on an Anglo-Welsh league with the WRU, we are now in discussions with the clubs to plan for next season's Allied Dunbar Premiership.

RICHARD PRESCOTT, Director of Communications, RFU, Rugby House, Twickenham TW1 1DS.

Barmy Army alliance with cricket board

From Mr Richard Peel

Sir, Michael Henderson was wrong to state that the England and Wales Cricket Board has "announced" it would form a commercial alliance with the Barmy Army (January 30).

In response to a question from the press, we simply thanked the Barmy Army for their support in Australia and stated that we would be prepared to listen to any commercial proposal they wished to put forward.

To date, they have not made contact with us and it is misleading to suggest that we have entered into a business relationship. Yours sincerely, RICHARD PEELE, Director of Corporate Affairs, ECB, Lord's Cricket Ground, NW8 8OZ.

From Mr Kelvin Richardson

Sir, For the information of Michael Henderson,

survey was completed in 1998, that means it looked at the best British player since 1973. Let's go back to the beginning: Well, for a start there is your colleague, the brilliant Gerald Davies. JPR and Gareth Edwards may not be eligible, but there's Phil Bennett, and, more recently, what about Jonathan Davies, Iwan Evans, Robert Howley and that's before I even look at the forwards... Ah, I think I see the problem — they are all, er, Welsh. Perhaps by "British" is meant "English".

I admit my partiality. I have been a Wales supporter for

more than 30 years. But I could probably list another ten players — Irish and Scots — ahead of Carling. And if it must be an English player, again there are many who would qualify ahead of him. What about, for example, someone who has more grace and talent — Jeremy Guscott. Seriously, if you were to compile your 1973-1998 composite Lions team, would Carling even make it to the bench?

Yours sincerely, SUSIE FOVER, 24 Claygate Road, London W13 9XG

Hoddle's exit

From Mr Andrew Wren

Sir, If you "score" England games by giving three points for a win and one for a draw, then you take the total points scored and divide by the number of games, you arrive at an average score which is a simple measurement of the England manager's success. On this basis, England scored better under Glenn Hoddle than under any of his four predecessors and, by this measurement alone, was the best manager England has had for at least 22 years.

Forerunners of disc golf

From Mr George Ince

Sir, Disc golf (Report, February 4) must be an American adaptation of plate golf. Some 50 years ago we played a form of golf game at scout camp, using enamel eating plates to aim at a series of targets. The action needed to propel the plates was similar to that needed for a Frisbee. The flight of the plate was often spectacular, particularly when the dispatch point was the top of a hill and the target at the bottom. The first target was always the trunk of a nominated tree, but from then on the winner of

each "hole" set the target and the distance for the next hole. Gateposts, holes in walls, fence posts, free-standing boulders all served as targets — much more variety than the standard targets of disc golf.

The great art was to hit the target softly, so that no great damage was done to the plate to destroy its balance, or indeed to make it unfit to eat from! Is this yet another game invented in Britain in which we no longer lead the world? Yours faithfully, GEORGE INCE, 18 Pine Court, Doune, Perthshire FK16 6JE.

From Mr Richard Hildesley

Sir, I was fascinated to read the description of disc golf. My late uncle, John Forrest, an England rugby international in the 1930s, devised a similar sport in the early Fifties, while we were camping on a farm in central Wales. Pre-Frisbee, the balls were aluminium plates, the greens were blankets and ground sheets strategically dotted round the field. Simple, but the source of much pleasure, as were many of the games he dreamt up to amuse a whole generation of us, who worshipped this particular Fied Piper. Yours nostalgically, RICHARD J. HILDESLEY, Garden Cottage, Woodside, Windsor Forest, Berkshire SL4 2DP.

This week in THE TIMES



Tomorrow
After the success of 1998, how will Mika Hakkinen, above, fare this season? Kevin Eason reports from Barcelona on the launch of McLaren's new Formula One car.

Wednesday
World champions France present the toughest possible test as Howard Wilkinson takes charge of England for the first time. Oliver Holt looks forward to the match at Wembley.

Thursday
Will it be first blood to England or Australia in the final of the triangular one-day cricket tournament?

Football Saturday
The FA Cup fifth round, tie by tie, including Fulham's prospects of upsetting Manchester United.

Gallant Ireland must regroup after cruel blow

But, from the first whistle when a switched kick-off worked to perfection, to Scotland Murray going over to seal victory. Scotland's was a superb performance. They did not have it all their own way but the Scottish forwards drove relentlessly at the heart of the Welsh pack and splintered them: Scotland did not do anything too flashy, and they tackled until the Welsh could take no more.

A marvellous start, then. Now what does this last Five Nations Championship have in store?

but he and his colleagues have been put in this position by the Irish selectors, for he has not been kicking regularly for Ulster. Simon Mason has had that responsibility and performed almost without fault, but he is not in the team as Conor O'Shea has been in such a devastating form.

Niall Woods should have played and been handed the goalkeeping duties. His success rate this season in the Premiership is above 80 per cent and his inclusion would have improved the exceptional team from the back of O'Shea, Woods and Bishop together.

The Irish should take heart from their performance the French, on the other hand, were a disappointment and seemed more intent on maiming the Irish than attempting

سكراي على الارض

RUGBY UNION

Robinson fury as Bath sink lower

Wasps 35
Bath 10

By MARK BALDWIN

NO RESULT this season has symbolised so graphically the decline and fall of the old Bath empire. For the first time in their proud history, Bath failed to score in a league fixture, and this was also their heaviest defeat in terms of points margin. It would have been even worse had Wasps not squandered five kicks.

"This was a total embarrassment for the club, and I have told the players that," Andy Robinson, the Bath coach, said. "I am embarrassed to be coach of Bath Rugby Club tonight. We were totally out-muscled and totally out-thought. We missed tackles and lacked any ability to keep the ball."

Robinson, however, did give credit to Wasps, who were ecstatic. Five tries decorated a Wasps performance that had everything — disciplined and hard-edged defence and a richness of attacking ideas that even included a couple of flamboyant dummies from Andy Reed, the veteran lock.

The majority of the 9,526 crowd relished every moment — especially the second body-swerve by Reed, against his former club, during the build-up to the first of two tries scored by Martyn Wood.

Robinson, as a prelude to his dark mood afterwards, made his feelings plain at that stage by bringing on four replacements. It made no dif-

ference. Wasps, combining pace and power in every area of the field, scored twice more in the last quarter.

Nigel Melville, the Wasps director of rugby, said: "Bath are among equals now — they have to live the same as everyone else. I said to my players before the start to look at their faces and see who they recognised. And you don't know them all now — you're not intimidated by them any more."

"I'm obviously very pleased, especially as we had an entire back division out there which

Cardiff may take over an English club to avoid having to close down after their hopes of an Anglo-Welsh League were dashed. Gareth Davies, the club's chief executive, said:

is under 25 and English, which must be a first for the Premiership."

There was a gaping hole in the Bath defensive line when, off the back of a line-out, Peter Scrivener romped away to claim the first score of the afternoon. Alex King, given goalkicking responsibilities in the absence of Kenny Logan, who had been in action for Scotland 24 hours earlier, missed two early penalties before finding his range.

He also converted a try by Mark Woodson, who was on hand to pick up and dive over after Paul Volley had scythed through, and the fly half stretched the Wasps lead to 20-0 with a second penalty four minutes after the resumption. Bath had just one chance

to get back into the game, but Mike Tindall, the centre, cut inside into a wall of defenders when, going over the Wasps 22, he had three men and a clear overlap outside him.

Scrivener set up the first try by Wood by charging down a kick by Matt Perry, and another barnstorming interchange of close-range passes up the right touchline led to a second try for Wood, the scrum half.

By now, Gareth Rees, appearing after a five-month spell on the sidelines, was on for King, but he could not convert the final try from Trevor Leota, either.

SCORERS: Wasps: Tries: Scrivener (18 min), Woodson (30), Wood 2 (50, 67), Leota (73). Conversions: King 2. Penalties: King 2 (24, 44).

SCORING SEQUENCE (Wasps first): 7-0, 10-0, 17-0 (half-time) 20-0, 25-0, 34-0, 36-0.

WASPS: J. Lewsey (8), P. Waller (10), M. Denney (15), R. Sampson (16), A. King (19), G. Rees (55, 67), M. Wood (20), D. Mole (30), Y. Leota (39), D. Alcup (40), J. G. Jones (41), W. G. Jones (42), A. Reed (43), S. Shaw (45), L. Dallaglio (46), P. Volley (47), J. Worsley (48), P. Scrivener (49).

BATH: M. Perry (1), B. Barrow (11), M. Tindall (12), M. Jones (13), J. G. Jones (14), A. Reed (15), M. Call (16), G. Cooper (17), A. Gomersall (18), K. Yates (19), M. Rees (20), A. Long (21), V. Volney (22), J. Melville (23), M. Hogg (24), B. Sturman (25), S. Borthwick (26), R. Eamesham (27), R. Webster (28), D. Lyle (29).

Referee: C. Thomas (Bridgend)



Maier takes to the air on his way to victory in the downhill

Maier keeps his nerve in exhilarating run

FROM GRAHAM DUFFILL
IN VAIL, COLORADO

HERMANN MAIER skied the best downhill of his short and remarkable career at the World Championships in Vail to take his second gold medal. Maier, 26, of Austria, who took the skiing world by storm two years ago with an attacking style that earned him the name "The Hermannator", has had mixed success in downhill.

He has won at Bormio twice and Wengen once but, because he knows only one speed — flat out — he has had some dramatic exits, memorably at the last winter Olympic Games in Nagano, Japan, when he flew off the course upside down. After skiing the super-giant slalom to the same one-hundredth of a second as his downhill rival, Lasse Kjus, of Norway, who has won four races this season to Maier's one, would it be a Hermannator run or would memories of Nagano lead him to tackle the steep, icy course at Beaver Creek with caution?

Kjetil-Andre Aamodt, of Norway, who has not had a downhill win since 1994, set

the first real target, racing No 6. Kristian Ghedina, of Italy, was fast in training but cautious here, leaving the stage for Maier. No 8, to burst from the starting gate. He tucked in for the first, flat gliding section, got an excellent line through the steep Talon turn, where skiers have to turn hard on ice with the slope dropping away from them. Then the fireworks began.

Maier burst through a series of six gates set tight like a super-giant slalom, shouldering aside the stiff plastic poles with his body, risking looking a ski or knocking himself off balance. It looked impressive, the Hermannator at his best, and analysis of split times would show later that Maier won the race on the top third of the course.

Maier said he decided to charge the gates with his body because the poles were too stiff to hit with his hand. "It is always dangerous to attack so much, but I thought I could not make the same crash as at

Nagano. It was a great race for me and at the end I made one of the softest jumps I have ever done."

In comparison to Maier's charge, Kjus looked as if he was on a training run. The big Norwegian's style is deceptive, but the man who had decided that he needed only one training run, then was asking Aamodt, his teammate, for advice on which line to take, seemed to have given the race mentally to the Hermannator.

Kjus, racing immediately after Maier, would have had no knowledge of his rival's time, but said: "I watched him on TV after the race and saw he skied like a crazy man, so I am not surprised he was so fast." With a headwind picking up strength, and snow beginning to fall, later competitors did not have a chance. Daron Rahivies, of the United States, who fell, was among those critical of the decision to race in such conditions. "I just couldn't see," he said.

Andrew Freshwater, of Great Britain, racing No 33, finished 24th.



Brendan Venter, of London Irish, who probed constantly for openings, attempts to escape Gloucester's clutches

Woods keeps Irish smiling

London Irish 42
Gloucester 20

By DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

OVER the water, a wheel may have been removed from the Ireland bandwagon, but London Irish keep rolling along. At a bright, cold Sunbury yesterday, they crept back into the top three of the Allied Dunbar Premiership to set up an intriguing clash with Leicester next Saturday.

The gap between the two form teams remains six points, with the Exiles having played one game more, but their brand of rugby remains an intoxicating mix. At times, they resemble nothing more than a sevens team playing the extended game.

In the opening quarter, the finesse that has become the Irish trademark was absent, almost as though they were in brief mourning for the national side, but with the wind behind them, they grew into their customary game, with Niall Woods making a significant contribution towards breaking the initial deadlock. The wing's dancing feet carried him into midfield for Berridge's first try.

It is an important time for Woods, if he is to break back into Ireland's first-choice side. "I'm happy that I'm playing well," he said. "If I was asked to kick too, it wouldn't affect me. That's just part of my game." That responsibility was shared with Jarrod Cunningham yesterday.

Richard Hill, the Gloucester director of rugby, made the point that the Irish squad, so replete with southern-hemisphere experience, is also more mature than most, with an average age of 28. With that in mind, Hill was pleased with the form shown by Ed Pearce, whose speed on the break helped Saint-Andre to his try.

The merit of Woods' try was that it came immediately after Carter had scored from a line-out to give Gloucester an illusory sniff of hope: two tries within five minutes pushed the Irish out to a 24-point lead, the first from Feanati, the second from a tapped penalty on half-way, from which Berridge outstripped Mapletoft to the corner.

Benton scurried to the line, but no one could deny the Irish the final word: Put and Kirke surged through the mid-field before Hatley, the prop, who has been invited to train today and tomorrow with the England A squad, loped delightedly to the line.

SCORERS: London Irish: Tries: Berridge (28 min), 57, Woods (38), Feanati (42), Cunningham (68), Hatley (68). Conversions: Cunningham 2, Woods. Penalty goal: Cunningham (4). Drop goal: Berridge (33). Gloucester: Tries: Carter (25), Saint-Andre (51), Benton (73). Conversions: Mapletoft. Penalty goal: Mapletoft (17).

SCORING SEQUENCE: London Irish first: 2-0, 3-3, 10-3, 13-3, 13-8 (half-time), 25-8, 32-8, 32-13, 37-13, 37-20, 42-20.

LONDON IRISH: J. Cunningham, S. Berridge, R. Todd, B. Venter, N. Woods, S. Baskin, K. Put, N. Hatley, R. Pina, R. Hardwick (cap), K. Putman (67 min), R. Strudwick, M. Bird (cap), N. Harvey, 6th J. Bore, R. Galloway, J. Feanati.

GLoucester: M. Mapletoft, T. Benton, T. Fankous (cap), A. Lumsden (77), R. Torrie, P. Saint-Andre (cap), R. Gonsdale-Jones, 20, S. Marner, S. Benton, T. Woodman, N. McGarry, A. Poles (cap), D. Hume, 62, R. Fidler, D. Sims (cap), M. Cornwell, 69, E. Pearce, N. Carter (cap), A. Hazell, 64, S. Ojomo. Referee: T. Fisher (Manchester)

Five Nations Rugby
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20th Feb Twickenham

England v France
20th March Twickenham

Wales v England
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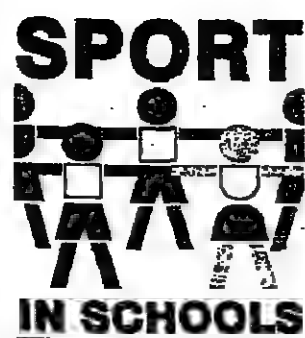
Ivo Tennant watches a new generation turn their hand to basketball

Youngsters shine at different game

THE popularity of basketball within schools is not the least reason for its standing as the fastest-growing indoor sport. Glorified on television and glamorised in fashion, the appeal is to the most impressionable. As evidenced in the final of the English Schools Association under-14 competition yesterday, in which Moulton completed a 33-48 victory over Greensward, standards are improving every year.

The competition had culminated in eight schools contesting the final rounds over the weekend at Greensward in Hockley, a spa town turned commuter stop on the hectic Liverpool Street to Southend line. All 1,350 pupils who attend this granted-maintained mixed comprehensive play basketball as part of the curriculum as well as outside school hours. Three girls, Vikki Willmore, Louise Gammon and Sarah Hopkins, have represented England at under-15 and under-16 levels.

Indeed, the growth of the sport within schools, particularly the state sector, is remarkable. Tony Mescall, the organiser of this competition and the PE teacher at Greensward, never played basketball at all in his youth — "I am from South Wales, where rugby and football were the sports," he said — and Moulton, a mixed comprehensive of 1,200 pupils near Northampton, was better known for



nurturing Ian Salisbury, the England leg spinner.

Neither of the finalists had won this shield before. Greensward's most prominent former pupil is Martin Girvan, the hammer thrower who distinguished himself with silver medals at two Commonwealth Games.

"Increased television coverage has done a great deal for the sport and so has the clothing and fashion," Paul Smith, the Moulton coach, said. "Every American film has a basketball connotation these days. Girls have got the bug and keep playing, so the standard is twice as good as when we started four years ago."

Football is still the most popular sport at Moulton — inevitably — and Northamptonshire send players to



Greensward School girls grapple with a student from Moulton School, centre, in the under-14 English schools basketball final

the school to coach cricket, but basketball, according to Smith "has dragged in a lot of kids who would not normally play sport". Two of their girls who took part in this final, Sophie Freeman and Andrea Wanstall, are in the England under-15 squad.

There are further benefits. The impressive new sports hall at Greensward, built last September through

a £540,000 loan and marked out for basketball on a semi-sprung floor, is also used by the local community. "It has cut down vandalism in Hockley," David Triggs, the Greensward head teacher, said. "When I arrived, I introduced the motto 'To make our best better'. We fully embrace Tony Blair's views on education and want to 'become a community learning centre. Anyone who says they are fed

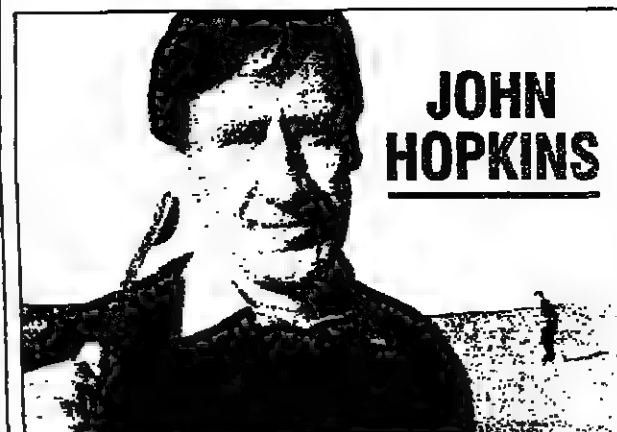
up with change in teaching is in the wrong job."

The significance of basketball to young people was also apparent from the fact that, in addition to Rochford Council, the sponsors included Nike. An England scout was also present, which was not surprising given that Greensward has teams of girls in the finals of the English Schools Association under-15s, the semi-finals of the under-16s and the quarter-finals of the under-19s. And the boys can play a bit, as well.

Although Moulton looked likely winners throughout this final, Greensward always kept their lead within bounds. Freeman was a tall, dominant player, scoring 27 of Moulton's 53 points. The captain, Ellie Birch, also taught the eye. Her opposite number, Willmore, 13, who has already represented England at under-15 level, achieved scored no fewer than 29 of Greensward's 48 points. There were moves executed in the match which would not have been attempted in schools basketball a few years ago.

Willmore has been playing basketball for only two years, having started at school. "My father was in the British Olympic squad for diving in 1980 before having to drop out," she said. "But this is a sport that is new to my family. I am ambitious to continue playing after I leave Greensward."

Bonallack will be a hard act to follow



JOHN HOPKINS

Henry Longhurst always said that he had the best job in the world. "I am paid to do what I want to do, which is to write about golf," the distinguished correspondent used to marvel, peering at his shoes through the bottom of a glass of gin.

But among those jobs that could push Longhurst's close is that of the secretary of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews. The incumbent of this office works a

wedge shot away from one of the broadest beaches in Britain, used in the opening scenes of *Chariots of Fire*. The room in which he works is big enough to hold a bunker, a putting green and a pitching area as well. From this vantage overlooking the 1st and 18th holes of the Old Course, half the Kingdom of Fife is visible on a clear day and, from the binoculars mounted on the balcony outside his office, the secretary can identify the make of a ball in the Road Hole bunker and count the dimples, too.

Sir Michael Bonallack has held this job since 1983. "It is nice to know a knight," David Fay, the executive director of the United States Golf Association (USGA), said when Bonallack was honoured last summer. "Michael has been the outstanding administrator in the game. Given what he has done as a British champion golfer and what he has contributed to the game, this is a most deserved honour. It is very rare to find a champion turning into an administrator in such a seamless manner."

Now though, Bonallack is putting out on the 18th green of his career. He will be 65 on December 31 and a successor is being sought to work alongside him for the past few months. A Glasgow-based firm, Genesis Consulting, has drawn up a shortlist to be considered by a five-man selection committee drawn from among the R and A hierarchy.

The chairman of this committee is Ian Webb, a leading Ulster businessman, who is chairman of the general committee. The other four members are Gordon Jeffrey, a retired Liverpool lawyer who made his name by his skilful handling of the R and A's case during the dispute with Ping Richard Cole-Hamilton, a former chief executive of the Clydesdale Bank and former chairman of Stakis Hotels; Dr David Marsh, a former Walker Cup player who is now a part-time occupational health physician on Merseyside; and Neil Crichton, a solicitor and auditor of the Court of Session in Edinburgh.

These are the men who are planning for the day when, for the first time for nearly 50 years, the name Bonallack will not ring out in golf. You cannot go anywhere in the world without meeting someone who knows, has played with or against Bonallack or sat on a committee with him.

He has said that his swing resembles that of "a drunk shovelling coal" but he won five English Amateur and five British Amateur titles and

competed in nine Walker Cup teams, being the playing captain of the one that won at St Andrews in 1971.

Two weeks ago, he was playing in a pro-am tournament with Ernie Els at Stellenbosch, near Cape Town. Last week, he was in Kenya. He will be off to the US for the Players' Championship in March and will act as a referee at the Masters in April. Who betide any player who thinks they can intimidate him into giving them a free drop.

Seve Ballesteros did precisely this a few years ago when his ball ended in an iffy lie and he called for a ruling. The moment that Bonallack's buggy hove into sight, with Bonallack wearing a blazer, his head covered by a baseball cap, Ballesteros probably knew he had no chance. He stated his case, Bonallack, who has known the odd bad lie in his time, listened unimpressed and then said, correctly and curtly: "Play it."

The man who brought Michael Bonallack to St Andrews is Colin MacLaine, a



Bonallack: bowing out

retired dentist from Lytham St Annes, and one of few Britons who are members of Augusta National. MacLaine, a past captain of the R and A, has recounted the story of how he persuaded Bonallack to take the job when they were sharing a taxi.

"There were 285 applicants and I whittled it down to 16. When we got down to the last four, they all went to be tested by an industrial psychologist. I still have the report on Michael somewhere. I remember the chap said that we should not be put off by his laid-back manner. He said that Michael would open his eyes wide enough to solve the problem in front of him and then go back to sleep again."

Applicants to succeed him include former international players, administrators and businessmen who play golf. It had been thought that the R and A might take this opportunity to make a root and branch change, but after a review three years ago this is not likely.

"The R and A is a highly efficient, tightly run organisation and that is good," Frank Hannon, Fay's predecessor at the USGA, said. "The R and A has a staff of what, 30? I think it is wonderful. If Michael has been responsible for curbing the growth of bureaucracy, then God bless him."

Langer's clanger gives Long title

BERNHARD LANGER, of Germany, had a triple bogey at the last hole to hand the Greg Norman International to Michael Long, of New Zealand, at The Lakes in Sydney yesterday.

Langer, who was seeking his first victory for 15 months, stood at ten under par with the 18th to play but hit his tee shot into a bunker. His second shot went over the green and then he chipped short. Langer was penalised a stroke for bumping his marker and needed two putts.

Langer finished with 80 for a seven under par total, while Long's final round of 72 had him at nine under par on 283.

Langer slipped to third place in the \$640,000 (around £400,000) tournament with Michael Campbell, of New

Zealand, second on eight under par. Long had started the day in fifth place, six shots behind Langer.

In the Malaysian Open, Padraig Harrington, of Ireland, missed a two-foot putt in Kuala Lumpur that cost him more than \$17,500 (around £11,000). Rather than finishing in joint second place with Alex Cejka, of Germany, and Bob May, of the United States, Harrington was in a five-way tie for fourth and instead of earning \$33,981 (around £21,000), he collected \$16,434 (£10,000). Gerry Norquist, of the US, won the event.

"A spectator clicked a camera as I putted, but it's my fault for hearing it," he said. "I'm just disgusted. I lost concentration. It was harder to miss it than hole it."

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SMOKING

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Mark Sharon makes tracks for the Manchester Velodrome, where cycling can be an uphill task

SPORT
FOR
ALL

Manchester does not have weather. That is why the Manchester Velodrome has a roof. It prevents the sort of downpour that soaked me when I arrived for my first session, from turning the world's fastest cycle track into a swimming pool.

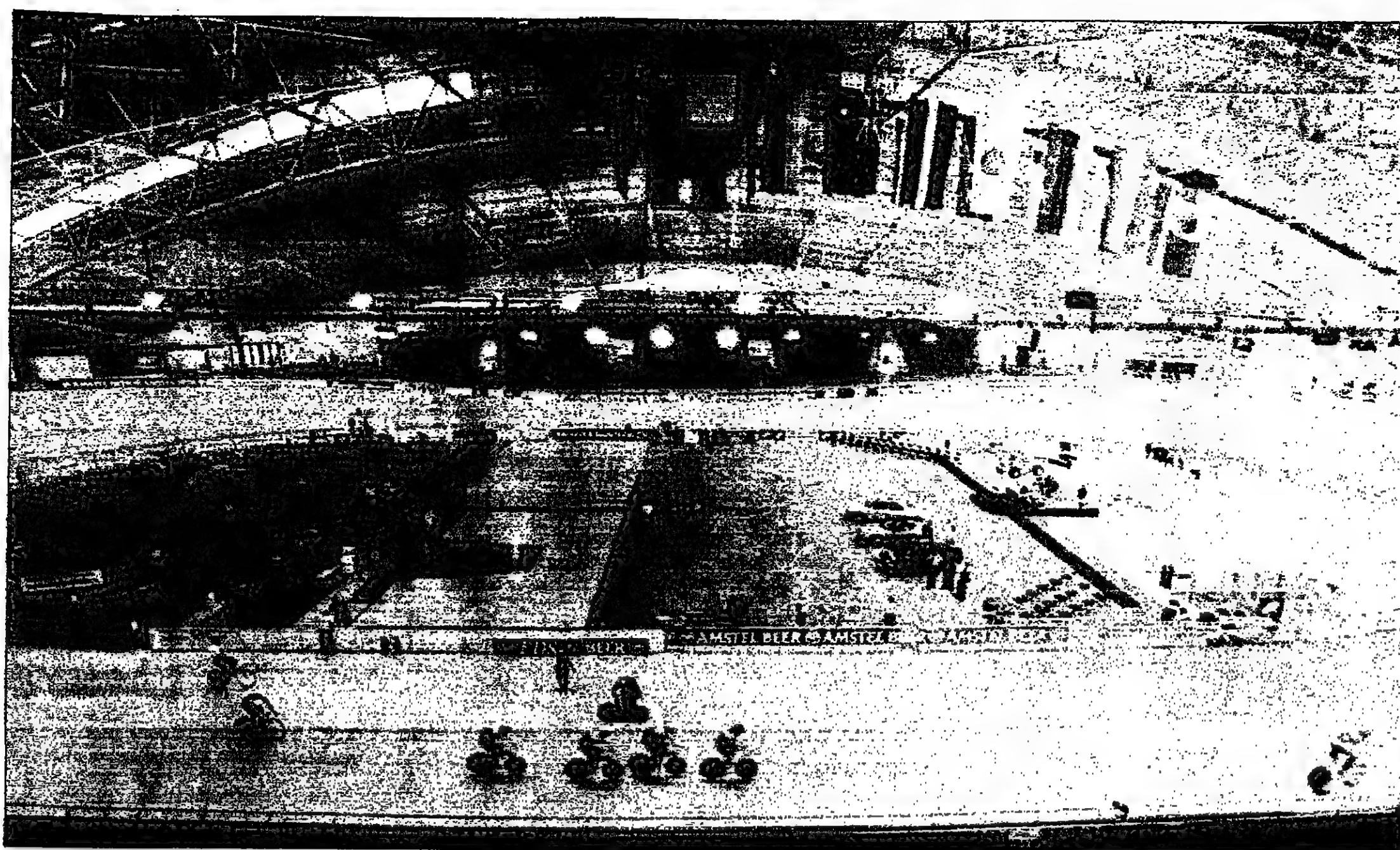
As roofs go, the Velodrome's actually is quite beautiful. From the outside, its great curved profile sits like the shell of an enormous metallic turtle, but as I approached, I realised that it was really an altar on which I could be about to sacrifice my dignity — or worse.

Inside, it is cavernous. Certainly television can never do justice to the 250-metre sweep of track. I expected something like the "wall of death", but actually it is shaped like the brim of a Stetson with the narrow ends turned up.

It is the angle of the banking that takes your breath away. From the bottom, the slope rises above you, 42 degrees of rubber-streaked Siberian pine at its steepest, dropping to 12½ degrees along the sides. The surface is too smooth to be able to climb to the top unless you have cramp. It is one of the world's newest and finest track venues and, since it opened in 1994, the Velodrome has seen a number of high-profile records tumble.

Track cycling is the purest form of the sport, but always has been a remote world, populated by people with enormous thighs. I could have gone easily to my grave never having ridden the track, but for an invitation to Manchester from Tim Lawson, director of Science in Sport (SIS), the sports nutrition manufacturer.

"Many top cyclists and sports journalists have never even seen a track, so we want to get them down to some lessons with the professionals, and then have a few races to get a real flavour for it," Lawson said. I was booking my train ticket almost before he had finished the bit about



The track at the cavernous Manchester Velodrome, which opened in 1994, rises above the cyclists at a frightening angle, but it is one of the best venues and a setting for Boardman's world hour record two years later

Learning to make the gradient

beers and curry to follow. SIS has sponsored many of Britain's top cyclists, on and off the track, for several years, including mountain bikers, BMX-ers and those maniacs, the downhillers. Their most famous rider, though, is Chris Boardman, who has had some of his greatest rides at Manchester, including his 1996 world hour record of 56.375km.

About 100 of us had accepted the invitation. At the track,

side, we were placed in the hands of Gary Bamber, who introduced us to the tool of the trade — the bike.

A track bike is a thing of engineering beauty. Perfectly proportioned, seemingly fragile but utterly impractical for everyday use, they can be costly, too. The likes of Boardman ride things that cost the same as a motorbike, but by weighing 16lb or less actually are worth, pound for pound, more than a Ferrari. Yet it still has

only a single fixed gear and no brakes. I must have been insane.

You can pretend that you are within the bounds of normality up to the second that you leave the safety of the handrail. You are sitting on a saddle, holding onto handlebars and your feet are in pedals. Then, as soon as you push away, all that familiarity is gone. I can only liken it to that first time on skis.

Around the inside of the

track there is a flat zone — wide enough for the ambulance that we hope we do not need. We ambled around it for our first few laps as we got used to the bike, before Gary urged us to get onto the track. That meant a lot more speed. My first few attempts to get onto the banking must have looked pathetic. I seemed to have forgotten how to turn the handlebars to the right. Then suddenly I was up. It was barely two feet up the track, but I felt really proud of myself — until I hit the first turn.

My first ski instructor was an Austrian called Eric, who would cry: "Lean out, no lean back," as he encouraged us to commit to the slope. I found myself desperately needing him again as my mind battled with the concept of leaning over when the banking was already angled precipitously.

Soon, though, you come to relish the lurch to the left as you whip around the corner. If you are going fast enough it is almost impossible to fall off, unless, of course, you hit something, or someone.

After several kilometres, I was ready for a break, so I sought out Boardman in the fitness suite below the track. I asked him if we were going to see him up on the boards, even for the fun of it. I could see him digest the word "fun" before replying: "I don't think so. It's a bit like a brickie being invited to give an exhibition on bricklaying."

I think I see his point. The idea of riding around the track without a record in his sights can hardly have been exhilarating and I imagine that he would not want to risk sharing the track with a pack of novices.



Boardman, left, passes on a few tips on the art of track cycling to Sharon, one of the novices

es. Minutes later I was in my first track race. Hurdling around the track on your own is one thing, but doing it in the company of others is like

doing 70mph on a motorway that has no lane markings. It is fantastic fun, though, elbow to elbow, not daring to look to either side. It is easy to cover a

couple of miles at 25mph without really noticing.

I was doing well until I tried to avoid someone pulling up in front. My immediate reaction was to stop pedalling. I did not have time to make any other mistakes. Riding a fixed gear means you cannot just stop pedalling. If you do, your legs are jerked around so much that you feel they are going to be ripped off. Getting back your rhythm quickly is the only alternative to a crash.

As an introduction, the day had provided more than enough for everyone to be proud of. The track has a fascination that must agree could become addictive. It is also like being invited into the inner sanctum of cycling when they have left the door open.

HOW TO GO CYCLE TRACK RACING

Track riding is an excellent form of all-weather conditioning. Not just cyclists, but many athletes from other sports use the track for building anaerobic fitness. Manchester Velodrome encourages beginners, for whom it holds special clinics. Track bikes can be hired, but you will need to bring clothes, shoes and a helmet. Track riding is a power-intensive activity, so an all-day session can be exhausting.

MANCHESTER VELODROME: Stuart Street, Manchester M11 4DQ (telephone 0161 223 2244, ticketline 0161 230 2307/2308). Internet: www.geocities.com/Colosseum/Area/9468/velocyc.htm

SCIENCE IN SPORT: for information on nutrition and energy products, contact 01254 246060.

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT
After 40 boards of the 1998 Gold Cup semi-finals, Cohen's team were 57 IMPs down to Price. Board 41 started their comeback.

Dealer East	N-S game	IMP
♠ 883 ♥ 87643 ♦ K9 ♣ Q98	♠ A10 ♥ A1074 ♦ A7 ♣ K6542	♠ 9 ♥ 8 ♦ Q8652 ♣ 2
♠ J7 ♥ KJ52 ♦ 3 ♣ J106543	♠ N ♥ W ♦ S ♣ S	
W Halberg N Schapiro E Simpson S Gordon	2S 4S 5C	Pass 5C

Contract: Six Clubs by South. Lead: nine of spades.

After West's thin raise of East's Weak Two, North clearly had to double (for take-out of course). Now East took the unusual action of bidding on. Normally if you have opened a Weak Two you leave the rest of the decisions to your partner, but exceptional distribution does occasionally justify another move. Here it bullied North-South into Six Clubs, a contract they might not have bid if left to themselves. With all of North's cards working, Six Clubs is an excellent contract.

After winning the spade lead Gordon cashed two top clubs. Even though this meant he had a trump loser, he was able to get dummy's spade away on a heart before West could ruff in.

At the other table Sandqvist as West passed

East's Two Spade opening. North doubled, and South bid Two No-Trumps, a conventional move on his methods to show a weakish hand. North raised to Three No-Trumps. After a spade lead from West and a spade continuation, that precarious contract might have gone off if declarer had misguessed the clubs. However, he took the club finesse and ended with eleven tricks, for a swing to Cohen of 12 IMPs. Note that in order to create enough entries to finesse and cash the clubs, declarer had to sacrifice one of his natural heart winners.

□ Anyone looking for a last-minute winter break should consider the Malta Bridge Festival starting on 27 February. For further details phone Sally Brock on 01494 450620.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

FRIGORIFICO
a. An Antarctic wind
b. An ice cream
c. A meat plant

COTHAM
a. A heavy linen
b. Limestone
c. Mug in shape of a man

ESRAJ
a. A stringed instrument
b. A princely heir
c. Romanisation of Urdu

APOPHATIC
a. Negative theology
b. A kind of rainwear
c. Nullifying a curse

Answers, page 44

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Oxford application

With the annual Varsity match between the teams from Oxford and Cambridge due on Saturday, March 6, at the RAC in London, moves are afoot to recognise chess at Oxford in the same way that Cambridge University already does. For many years, Cambridge has awarded half blue recognition to their chess team. However, their chess-playing colleagues at Oxford have not yet been similarly honoured.

Tomorrow Oxford will apply to the Oxford Blues Committee for half-blue recognition in the Oxford-Cambridge Varsity Match.

Both Oxford and Cambridge have an excellent record in producing top class chess talent, including Jon Speelman, a World Championship semi-finalist and David Norwood, a captain of the British Olympic Team.

Drawn match

A ten-game match between Britain's top ranked grandmaster Michael Adams and the leading US grandmaster Yasser Seirawan has ended in a 5-5 tie. Today I give one victory by Adams and the full cross-table of results.

White: Yasser Seirawan
Black: Michael Adams
Mermaid Beach Club
Bermuda 1999

Final cross-table

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Adams	1	½	½	0	½	0	½	1	½	½
Seirawan	0	½	½	1	½	1	½	0	½	½

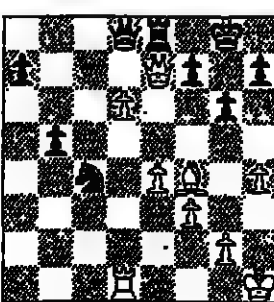
In the above table, 1 represents a win, ½ a draw, and 0 a loss

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

White to play. This position is from the game Georgiev-Pelleter, Germany, 1998.

How did White clear a path for his passed pawn to advance?



Solution, page 44

NETBALL

Buck the trend as Middlesex close in

By CATHY HARRIES

MIDDLESEX'S determined challenge to capture their first English Counties League title showed no sign of faltering when they comfortably defeated Bedfordshire, the 1997 winners, 51-33 to retain pole position in the table.

Only four points separate the top three after their closest rivals, Derbyshire and Essex Met, the champions, recorded convincing victories against Birmingham and Surrey respectively. Lorraine Law, who was sidelined with an ankle injury for the international against Wales last week, returned for the holders, but Lyn Carpenter, her England team-mate, limped out of the Surrey side before half-time with a similar injury.

Shooter Mel Buck laid the foundations for Middlesex's triumph, scoring 44 of her

team's goals, but Helen Lunsdale, playing in her last game before joining her England team-mates, Amanda Newton, from Essex, and Naomi Siddall and Olivia Murphy, of Derbyshire, in New Zealand this month, was also in great form.

Sally Horrox, the Middlesex captain, said: "It was good to have our England defender Hellen Manufo back for her first full game after injury."

Karen Aspinall, the Loughborough University student, turned in a match-winning performance at wing attack for Derbyshire as they crushed Birmingham 65-32. Rosie Port, the Derbyshire coach, also praised the accuracy of Lisa Topliss, the former England shooter, who scored 36 goals, including a 100 per cent record in the second half.

SNOW REPORTS

	Depth (cm)	Conditions	Past 12 Resort	Offp.	Weather (5pm)	Last snow		
	L	U	Frost		°C			
Andorra	50	90	Fair	Open	Varied	Snow	3	7/2
Austria								
Alpbach	75	196	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	0	7/2
Obertauern	50	255	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-5	7/2
St Anton	130	450	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-7	7/2
Canada								
Lake Louise	175	185	G + U	Open	Powder	Fair	-2	6/2
France								
Alpe d'Huez	120	210	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-4	7/2
La Plagne	110	200	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-4	7/2
La Tignes	145	230	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-7	7/2
La Tignes	110	185	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	0	7/2
Les Arcs	142	250	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-2	7/2
Meribel	120	230	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-3	7/2
Thignes	123	230	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-8	7/2
Val Thorens	120	190	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-6	7/2
Val d'Isere	110	240	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-6	7/2
Italy								
Cortina	90	200	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-2	7/2
Cortina	30	70	Hard	Hard	Cloud	-2	5/2	7/2
Livigno	70	100	Good	Open	Varied	Snow	-7	7/2
Val di Cembra	50	100	Hard	Artificial	Varied	Fair	-4	6/2
Switzerland								
Châtaignier	50	150	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-5	7/2
Châtaignier	150	215	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-6	7/2
Grindelwald	80	215	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-3	7/2
Interlaken	140	250	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-4	7/2
Ischgl	90	250	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-3	7/2
St Moritz	45	120	Good	Open	Powder	Wind	-3	6/2
Valais	70	210	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-2	7/2
Wengen	60	120	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-5	7/2
Zermatt	80	200	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	0	7/2
United States								
Aspen	105	130	Good	Open	Powder	Cloud	3	7/2
Aspen	193	193	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-7	7/2

http://www.ski-club.co.uk

L = lower slopes, U = upper slopes

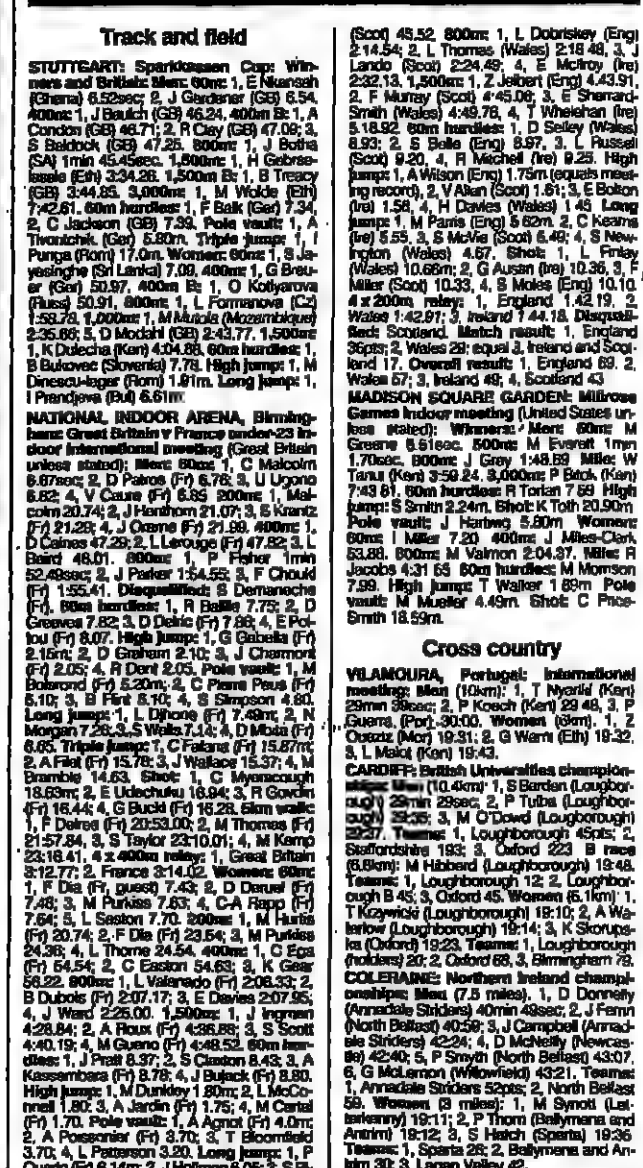
http://www.ski.com.uk L = lower slopes, U = upper slopes

24 60 Leigh 16 York 12
Leigh: Tries: Fairclough, Kendrick. Goals:
First round: Tameside 2 Rochdale 2 (aet.)

48 Kendrick 4. York: Thist. Dean, Judge.
56
40 Strange. Att: 1,546.
38

[illegible]

ATHLETICS

[illegible][illegible]

jumps: 1, Y Squeania (Fr) 12.90m; 2, C
 Legoudec (Fr) 12.68; 3, J Hurst 12.20; 4, L
 Dupont 12.23. Shot: 1, P Davis 15.05; 2, M
 Allen (10.6km): 1, S Tobin (Swansea) 34min
 55sec; 2, A Gardiner (Cardiff) 35.11; 3, A
 Pritchard (Cwm Llan) 36.22. Taster: 1

[illegible][illegible]

Duty of English clearing bank collecting stolen cheque

The Honourable Society of the Middle Temple v Lloyds Bank plc and Another
Before Mr Justice Rix
[Judgment January 21]

Where an English clearing bank collected a stolen English cheque marked "A/C payee only", as agent for a foreign collecting bank, whose customer was not the payee of the cheque and who took off with the proceeds, the English clearing bank was liable to the true owner of the cheque.

The Commercial Court of the Queen's Bench Division so held in allowing a claim by the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple that Lloyds Bank plc and Sekerbank Turk Anonim Sirketi were liable to Middle Temple in acting negligently in the conversion of Middle Temple's cheque.

Mr Antonio Bueno, QC and Mr Jake Davies for the Middle Temple; Mr Peter Goldsmith, QC and Mr William Blair, QC, for Lloyds Bank; Mr Adrian Beltrami for Sekerbank.

MR JUSTICE RIX said that the dispute arose from what was assumed to be the theft in the post of a cheque drawn by the Middle Temple payable to its insurers, Sun Alliance Insurance Ltd, in the sum of £183,899 and drawn on its bankers Child and Co.

The cheque was dated January 4, 1995, crossed "Not negotiable A/C payee only". The cheque Act 1992 had come into force on June 16, 1992 and therefore applied to make such a cheque non-transferable under English law.

On January 11, the cheque turned up in Turkey where it was presented to the Istanbul (Levent) branch of Sekerbank by a man

called Kamil Sese who was not an existing customer of that bank. Sekerbank agreed to collect the cheque for Mr Sese and sent it to Lloyds Bank for collection.

On January 20, the cheque was debited by Child and Co to the Middle Temple's account. Also on January 20, Lloyds received a urgent message from Sekerbank which stated that its client was in a difficult position and urged them to credit the cheque promptly.

On January 23 it was credited to Lloyds and on January 24 by Lloyds to Sekerbank. On January 25 and 26, Mr Sese withdrew the majority of the proceeds in cash from the account which it had been permitted by Sekerbank to open to receive the proceeds of the cheque.

On February 13 it was realised that the cheque had gone astray but had nevertheless been paid. Middle Temple and not Sun Alliance was to be treated as the true owner of the cheque.

Banking practice
His Lordship's conclusions derived from the evidence of witnesses as to banking practice were: 1 Clearing banks continued to recognise a duty to the true owner even in respect of cheques sent for collection. 2 Foreign banks, indeed the law demanded that they did so, subject to their defence under section 4 of the Cheques Act 1957.

3 Clearing banks recognised a duty to have regard, within the practicalities of the process, to specific types of danger which came in their notice, such as that of counterfeit cheques, or fraudulently over-stamped cheques.

What could be done in all the circumstances to guard against such dangers, and what in any particular situation might or might not be regarded as a discharge of their

duty, was not for his Lordship to say.

3 As to the question of the identity of the foreign bank's customer in relation to the named payee of an A/C payee cheque, virtually every clearing bank nowadays, their general practice was to assume that the foreign bank had carried out the necessary inquiries and adopted the necessary precautions, and that that assumed that the need to give any similar consideration to such matters.

That assumption was necessitated by the fact that they were not in a position to know who the foreign bank's customer was, but equally it was based on a belief that the foreign bank was aware of what English law demanded.

In the case of the non-transferability of an A/C payee cheque following the 1992 Act, Lloyds two major competitors, but not Lloyds itself, had informed their correspondent banks, or at any rate those who made major use of their services as agents for collection, of what the Act required.

4 Even though the banks gave no consideration in the ordinary way to the identity of the foreign bank's customer, if anything came to their notice in a particular case, they would take steps designed to protect the owner of the cheque.

Similarly, if it came to their notice that a correspondent bank appeared not to have regard for its obligations to the owners of cheques, they would take steps to put it right.

It seemed to his Lordship that that practice reflected, and was in essence consistent with, the judgments in *Importers v Bank Ltd* [1972] 2 KB 207, having regard to the changes in the law and to the growth of and in-

creased automation applied to that class of business since that time. Was Lloyds liable to Middle Temple?

The clearing bank which acted as agent for collection for another bank or financial institution, such as a building society or post office, domestic or foreign, was dealing with a customer which was interposed between it and the ultimate individual customer for whom the cheque was collected.

Although the clearing bank continued to exist, in the *Marfani* sense (see *Marfani and Co Ltd v Midland Bank Ltd* [1968] 1 WLR 950) to the true owner of the cheque, it was in general entitled to consider that that duty would be performed by due reliance on its own customer to have regard for the interests of the true owner, since it was only its own customer which was in a position to know the circumstances in which the cheque was brought for collection and the identity of the ultimate customer to whom it was to be paid.

However, the extent to which the clearing bank was justified in depending on its own customer in that sense must depend on all the circumstances.

Where a clearing bank was agent for collection for a domestic bank, it was entirely justified in assuming that the domestic bank knew the extent of its own responsibilities for the purposes of collecting an "A/C payee" cheque since the enactment of the 1992 Act.

Where, however, the clearing bank was acting on behalf of a foreign correspondent bank, it did not necessarily follow that it was justified similarly and to the same extent in assuming that the foreign bank was aware of its responsibilities under English law.

The change effected by the 1992 Act was a case in point. Despite what must have been long familiarity with the "A/C payee" crossing, a foreign banker would not have known, without being aware of the 1992 Act itself, that such a crossing now made an English cheque non-transferable.

A foreign bank would not have known, unless it had been aware of the 1992 Act, that following that Act such a cheque could only be paid to the named payee.

Midland bank thought it right to advise its correspondent banks of the change effected by the 1992 Act, and Barclays Bank did much the same. Lloyds thought of doing the same but in the end decided not to do so.

In his Lordship's judgment Midland and Barclays acted prudently and Lloyds did not. Lloyds was unable to say that it had followed good banking practice.

In his Lordship's judgment, Lloyds had not shown that it had done what it could have done and in accordance with good banking practice, should have done so in order to inform Sekerbank of the effect of the 1992 Act.

Lloyds could not sustain the burden of showing that Sekerbank would probably have made the same error if a Lloyds letter had been sent. Lloyds had failed to show that the precaution of a letter in explanation of the 1992 Act would have been of no use and therefore failed to bring itself within the statutory defence under section 4 of the 1957 Act.

His Lordship agreed with Mr Goldsmith that an agent for collection like Lloyds owed the same duty to the owner of every cheque, whether it was for £10 or for £100,000.

His Lordship agreed with Mr Goldsmith that an agent for collection like Lloyds owed the same duty to the owner of every cheque, whether it was for £10 or for £100,000.

The resistance to the case on liability was one which, in the end, P & O had to abandon on the fifth day of trial. If the case had been properly investigated by P & O, if the senior paper and the duty safety officer had troubled to go and look at the scene of the accident and if they had had regard to the carpenter's records, it seemed very unlikely that liability would have been defended at all.

As far as quantum was concerned, the defence was based upon the allegation of fraud which had failed in its entirety, and in her Ladyship's view there had never been sufficient material upon which an allegation could properly be based. In those circumstances it was, unusually, a proper case for costs to be awarded on the indemnity basis.

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Where a bank asked its English agent for collection to collect English cheques crossed "A/C payee", his Lordship did not understand how without some express disclaimer, it could say that it had not warranted that its customer was entitled to the proceeds.

Therefore, either because of an implied warranty, or because of an implied warranty, but in his Lordship's judgment for both reasons, Lloyds was entitled to be indemnified by Sekerbank against its loss by reason of carrying out Sekerbank's instructions or request.

Contributions
Both Lloyds and Sekerbank were liable to the Middle Temple in respect of the same damage and his Lordship was entitled to order contribution under section 2(1) of the Civil Liability (Contribution) Act 1978 on the basis of what was just and equitable.

In the present case, Lloyds was entitled to a complete indemnity, as his Lordship just held, the appropriate order for the purposes of the Act was again a complete indemnity, as section 2(1) of the 1978 Act allowed, Sekerbank was therefore entitled to no contribution from Lloyds.

In conclusion, Middle Temple had succeeded against both Lloyds and Sekerbank and Lloyds was entitled to a complete indemnity against Sekerbank.

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His Lordship was not, however, to be thought of as agreeing that a bank would acquire itself of that duty of care in a particular case concerning a cheque for a very large amount by treating it in exactly the same way as a cheque for a very small amount.

It might be possible that a cheque for a large amount would come forward in circumstances which, at any rate when that cheque had come to the attention of management, would or ought to put the bank on inquiry.

In his Lordship's judgment, Lloyds had failed to prove that it was not put on inquiry. If it had started asking questions of Sekerbank, it seemed obvious that the fraud would have been discovered. It followed that Lloyds could not escape liability to the Middle Temple.

That result properly reflected a balance between the interests of the true owner of cheques, the policy of the 1992 Act, the light against fraud, the interests of the clearing banks, and the practicalities of such business, all in the context of banking practice.

Lloyds was therefore responsible for the conversion of Middle Temple's cheque.

Was Sekerbank liable to the Middle Temple?

It seemed to his Lordship to be the grossest negligence for the 4 Levant branch to accept an English cheque payable to an English company in sterling for a large sum of money from a stranger who was not at that time an existing customer, even if he did come with a reference from a customer, without, as the evidence went, him being asked for or supplying a reasonable explanation as to why he was in

possession of such a cheque, or wanted a bank to collect it for him. Sekerbank had failed in bringing itself within section 4 of the 1957 Act defence and was liable to the Middle Temple in conversion.

Could Sekerbank claim an indemnity from Lloyds on the ground of its mandate or on the ground of Lloyds' breach of duty to it?

On the evidence of banking practice as between Sekerbank and Lloyds, it was Sekerbank's duty to ensure that it was collecting for the right customer and true owner.

Could Lloyds claim an indemnity against Sekerbank pursuant to an implied indemnity or warranty?

An important distinction was to be made between the case where the agent was in breach of some duty vis-à-vis the party which had requested him to act, and the case where the agent was in breach of some duty to a third party.

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Where, however, the agent for collection was not in breach of any duty vis-à-vis its correspondent bank, his Lordship did not see why the implied indemnity could not avail the agent, unless of course it had acted in bad faith or in any way which was to its knowledge or manifestly unjust, or, as has been said outside its authority.

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MICHAEL CLARK

Interims: Torex. **Finals:** Hercules Incorporated. **Economic statistics:** none scheduled.

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

BT's deal with AT&T to form a joint venture company providing international services for corporate clients is undergoing regulatory scrutiny.

BRITISH AIRWAYS: The

Peter Job, chief executive of Reuters, the share price of which has soared despite a warning

Premium traffic dropped 4 per cent, while economy class was up almost 13 per cent. Currency factors will have continued to take a toll on profitability, with the

quarter. The results will reflect low oil prices, falling global demand for the group's products and massive restructuring costs.

In December, Shell unveiled one of the most sweeping restructur-

Profits were dented by the pensions mis-selling scandal. The

owner of *The Times*, is expected comfortably to exceed the 200,000 subscribers originally targeted for the end of 1998. It is also hoped that at least a quarter of that number will be new customers.

The payout is likely to be pegged at 2.75p. There is unlikely to be any fresh news on the group's attempt to takeover Manchester United, a move that has

In Europe, the German industrial output and unemployment figures could add to the current gloom over the health of the euro-

ALASDAIR MURRAY

The Sunday Telegraph: Buy Reuters. Anglo Irish Bank. Senior Engineering. Capital Shopping Centres. **The Sunday Times:** Buy Dana Petroleum, Birkby, Winchester, Durlacher. **The Mail on Sunday:** Buy Manganese Bronze. Scottish & Southern Energy. **The Observer:** Buy Reuters. **The Express on Sunday:** Buy ASW, Cantab Pharmaceuticals, Britz Allcroft.

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سكوا بتة الامل

One to challenge
Ver rivals

THE FACTS

Sales: £914 million for the year ending December 31, 1997. Results for 1998 to be announced on February 25.
Pre-tax losses: £139 million.
Subscribers: 2.16 million in the UK, of which 487,000 are pre-pay, at December 31, 1998. In addition, the company has 234,000 subscribers in France and 266,000 in Germany at June 30, 1998.
Market value: £10.4 billion.
Employees: 5,000.

THE BOARD

The chief executive of Orange is **Hans Snook**, 50, who was born in Germany, but brought up in Canada. Mr Snook is a graduate of the University of British Columbia in Vancouver and launched his career in the catering industry.

Mr Snook later moved to Hong Kong, where he ran a telephone paging service for Hutchison Whampoa, the investment group. In 1993 Hutchison decided to move Mr Snook to London to launch its UK mobile phone company, Orange.

Orange has only two other executive directors: its 37-year-old finance director, **Graham Howe**, and **Colin Tucker**.

Mr Howe was appointed in 1996 after working as finance director for Hutchison's telecoms business in the UK.

Mr Tucker, Orange's 54-year-old technical and operations director, is a former industrial professor at the University of Loughborough. He joined the company in 1991 after holding several engineering-related positions at Plessey Telecoms.

In addition, Orange has nine non-executive directors, most of whom represent the company's largest shareholders, Hutchison Whampoa and British Aerospace.

These non-executives include **Canning Fok**, managing director of Hutchison Whampoa and Orange's chairman, and **Richard Lapthorne**, finance director of BAE.

Orange also boasts three heavyweight bankers as non-executive directors: **John Bond**, chief executive of HSBC; **Paul Myers**, chief executive of NatWest Wealth Management; and **Don Fullerton**, chairman of the executive committee of CIBC.

If any company in the FTSE 100 could define the corporate spirit of the 1990s it would probably be Orange. Britain's third-largest mobile phone company is staffed mainly by call centre operators. It has never made a profit, yet it has a stock market value of more than £10 billion.

The company's brand alone — made famous by the classic marketing slogan "the future's bright, the future's Orange" — has been individually valued at £1.8 billion.

Yet, at present, it is far from certain whether the future will be bright, or indeed Orange. As far as the company's profit and loss account goes, it is more likely to be red, at least until next year. Given this tentative financial position, and competition from the mighty £67 billion combination of Vodafone and AirTouch, some believe that Orange may even face a long-term future as part of a different organisation.

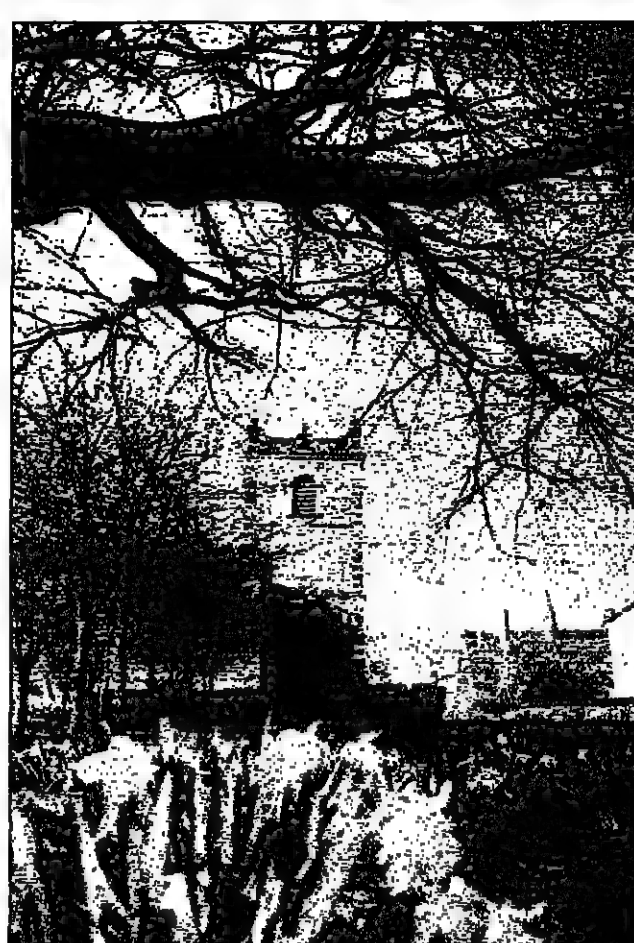
Orange was created in 1994 by Hutchison Whampoa — the Hong Kong investment group controlled by the billionaire tycoon Li Ka-shing — and British Aerospace. The launch of the company was an enormous gamble for Hutchison, which had already failed to break into the UK mobile phone market with a doomed venture called Rabbit a year earlier.

Before Orange launched, many thought the British mobile phone market — which at that time had just two million customers — was already too crowded. That prediction turned out to be very wrong: a staggering 2.5 million mobile phones were sold this Christmas alone. Orange did, however, face stiff competition: Vodafone and Cellnet were already established and One2One had just been launched. Yet Orange was convinced there was a place for a mobile phone group with a strong, aspirational brand, which differentiated itself from the competition with innovative services.

Hans Snook, then head of Hutchison's telecoms interests in the UK, was hired to run the company. Although Snook was virtually unknown in the City, he had impressed Hutchison with his work in Hong Kong's paging and cellular market. Mr Snook, then 45, also fitted the Orange image perfectly: in fact, he still often wears jeans and a leather jacket to work.

Orange immediately made its mark on the UK telecoms market by launching services such as per-second billing, caller identification, free insurance and a selection of five different tariffs. However, this was all necessary for Orange

CORPORATE PROFILE



Orange has taken great care over its image, from its striking advertising campaigns, top right, to its efforts to disguise its mobile phone masts or hide them in church spires. Hans Snook has overseen its emergence as Britain's third-largest mobile phone company, which is mainly staffed by call centre operators

to lure customers away from its larger rivals at a time when its network covered only half the UK's population. Orange has since built Britain's biggest network. In physical terms, with 5,000 cell sites (mobile phone masts). By 2001 the company aims to have increased this number to 10,000. As part of this enormous roll-out programme, Orange decided to launch the Millennium Landmark Initiative (supported by the Prince of Wales) to find ways of making mobile phone masts less ugly. Opinion is still divided, however, on its success.

Orange's network now covers 98 per cent of Britain's population and 80 per cent of its geographic area — still less than Vodafone and Cellnet, but significantly more than One2One. However, the capacity and quality of the network is very high: a recent Ofcom report said that Orange's "call success rate" — ie, how many times customers make calls without being cut off, — was

significantly better than any of its competitors in the UK.

Orange's strong brand and high-tech network, plus the backing of Hutchison and BAE, helped the company to float successfully on the stock market in April 1996 at 205p a share, valuing it at £2.45 billion. Today, Orange's shares trade in the region of 860p, valuing it at £10.4 billion. On flo-

ration, Hutchison reduced its stake to 49 per cent, while BAE sold down to about 21 per cent, later reducing this again to about 5 per cent.

Orange shareholders have a hefty presence on the company's board, resulting in a large number of non-executive directors. Indeed, there are only three executive directors: Mr Snook, Graham Howe, fi-

nance director, and Colin Tucker, technical and operations director. Canning Fok, managing director of Hutchison, is non-executive chairman, with Hutchison employees filling three other non-executive positions.

Mr Snook believes that both Hutchison and BAE could eventually reduce their stakes in Orange further, which would inevitably have an impact on the company's board structure. He says: "BAE likes the business and said that they are long-term holders of stock. But this is not a core business for them. Hutchison is committed to telecoms and has always said they will have large holdings in Orange because of that. But would they sell down their holding to 40 per cent? I suppose that's very possible. It's also possible that they might take BAE's stake."

At present, the City seems to like Orange's management, although there has been some grumbling over the company's late adoption of pre-pay service-

es, which are proving hugely popular, and the company's belated introduction of more competitive pricing. Orange's customer service is also suffering from serious problems, with customers waiting up to 25 minutes for a response from its help desk.

Overall, though, Orange's ability to attract high-spending customers and keep them has impressed the City. In fact, Orange's "churn" rates of customers leaving the network are far below those of its rivals. Mr Snook is still suspicious of the quality of pre-pay customers. He says: "The key to customer loyalty is having a relationship with your customer. We're the only people who even get the names and addresses of pre-pay customers. The good thing about pre-pay is what it has done for perception rather than reality."

The year ahead will be a testing time for Orange. It may have to cope with aggressive price competition from Vodafone AirTouch although Mr

Snook believes that the cost of the merger will make the expanded company more conservative on pricing.

Orange will also see its brand launched in Germany and France, where it does not own its own networks, but instead operates "virtual networks" by bulk-buying air time from rivals. Orange will also launch branded services in Belgium and Switzerland in partnership with other companies. In addition, Orange has licensed its brand to operators in Israel and Hong Kong. However, analysts argue that this strategy is rather messy, and they are not convinced of the logic behind Orange providing services in countries where it does not own networks.

Integrity Works says that the company's published materials relating directly to ethical expression are short of best practice, bearing in mind today's climate in which many leading companies are at pains to explain their approach to these matters in detail. But it has plans to deal more fully with these issues.

According to Crisp Consulting, Hans Snook's relative inexperience indicates that he should receive remuneration equalling two thirds of his £1.15 million a year, while the non-executive directors are underpaid.

Serious questions remain over Orange's ability to compete internationally by itself, and its ability to bid for the next generation of mobile phone licences — expected to be auctioned by the Government next year — which could cost in the region of £500 million each. Still, the company has survived so far against all the odds, and it has the financial might of Hutchison behind it. Orange also owns one of the most sophisticated networks — and established brands — of any operator in Europe. The future may not be certain, but it does look bright.

CHRIS AYRES

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

"If I was Hutchison Whampoa [Orange's 49 per cent shareholder] I think I would be extremely pleased with the way my investment in the UK cellular industry has gone. But everyone has a price and, with the funding frenzy that's going on in the industry right now, that price is getting more attractive all the time."

Alan Lyons, ABN Amro.

"Orange is still going for the kind of customer that stays longer and spends more, while everyone else is seeing a fall in average customer spend. You should not underestimate the relationship Orange has with Hutchison Whampoa, which is ultimately a very powerful funding partner. I see Orange being an acquirer rather than a bid target."

Jim McCafferty, SG Securities

Underground to be extended with private funds

By MARTIN WALLER

LONDON TRANSPORT is seeking private funds to extend the Underground into southeast London, an area that has previously been largely shunned by the Tube.

The organisation is working on four options to extend the East London line, which currently runs as far south as New Cross, by the year 2004. All four of these options will be put to John Prescott, Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, some time this summer, but the Government is broadly in favour if the necessary funding can be found.

The intention is that the selected scheme will be built either as a public-private partnership or as a private finance initiative.

Both options would require some investment from engineering or construction compe-

nies with experience in railways.

There are already plans to extend the line northwards to Highbury & Islington station, and planning consent for this has been sought.

The new line to the south would share existing overground railway lines and use existing rail stations, so minimising the cost.

But the track would have to be upgraded and some of it removed or resited, and there would be further building work at the stations.

The four options, all starting from the Surrey Quays tube station near the end of the existing East London line, are:
□ A line through Dulwich and Tooting to Wimbledon.
□ One through Dulwich and Crystal Palace to East Croydon.
□ Through Denmark Hill to Clapham Junction.

□ Through Sydenham and Anerley to East Croydon again.

The four London councils whose territory the line would cross, are all in agreement about the plans.

London Underground is convinced the project is feasible and could start as soon as clearance comes from the Government and the new Mayor of London once he or she is in place.

The scheme will also require detailed planning permission because of the inevitable disruption as lines are modified.

London Underground has said it is keen to press ahead with the necessary planning applications.

South of the Thames lost out to a great extent when the Underground network was gradually being built because it was felt already to be well served with overground lines.



Stagecoach's commuter-rich South West Trains territory faces competition from GB Railways, which runs Anglia

Stagecoach's SWT faces challenge

By FRASER NELSON

STAGECOACH is to have its control over the lucrative South West Trains franchise broken by GB Railways, a £16 million minority that runs the Anglia Railways network.

Tim Clarke, Anglia's man-

aging director, is planning to launch an attack on SWT's commuter-rich territory using new trains that will be leased from Stagecoach's Porterbrook subsidiary.

The result is likely to be a fight for commuters on the coveted Southampton to Lon-

don line, seen as the backbone in the SWT network.

Anglia, GB Railways' only UK franchise, is planning its new service under the Moderation of Competition scheme — drawn up during privatisation — which will allow train operators to venture outside their

own territory. So far, competition has been allowed in only the few areas where franchises overlap. However, from September, train companies will be able to poach passengers in the middle of a rival's patch if they can prove that there is a gap in the market.

Meridien to open for Sydney Olympics

By DOMINIC WALSH

GRANADA'S Meridien Hotels chain has won a contract to operate a five-star hotel in Sydney.

It is scheduled to open in February 2000, in time for the Olympic Games.

The A\$120 million (£47.4 million) property is being developed by Singatronics, which has interests in three other hotels in Australia and is listed on the Singaporean stock exchange.

The 34-storey hotel will have 415 rooms and a health and fitness club.

News of the contract win comes hard on the heels of Meridien's selection to operate a 350-room hotel opening in San Diego in 2001 as part of a US\$90 million retail and leisure development.

Both projects are significant moves for the chain in countries where it has recognised it has too limited a presence.

Elsewhere, the company has recently signed seven new hotel contracts in Egypt and one in Bethlehem.

WORD WATCHING

Answers from page 39

FRIGORIFICO

(c) In South Africa, a meat-packing plant, especially one concerned with the freezing of carcasses for export. In American-Spanish the name means literally a refrigerator. "We passed several cattle barges on our journey up the river, most of them taking cattle to the frigorificos near Rosario."

COTHAM

(b) Limestone. The toponym of a village near Bristol. It is the name of an argillaceous limestone having dendritic markings, also called landscape marble or stone. "One band of limestone, the fascinating Cotham marble, was often seen polished in fragments on Victorian mantelpieces."

ESRAJ

(a) An Indian stringed instrument with three or four strings, and extra sympathetic strings. The Bengali name. "The Esraj is a long and narrow bowed stringed instrument used mainly in Bengal to accompany singing."

APOPHATIC

(a) In theology, applied to knowledge of God obtained by way of negation. The Greek word means negative or denial. "Apophaticism is, above all, an attitude of mind which refuses to form concept about God."

SOLUTION TO WINNING MOVE

1. Qxh3-Bxh3; 2. Rx7-Kg8; 3. Nh6 checkmate.

CHANGE ON WEEK

THE POUND

US Dollar 1.6384 (-0.0049)
Euro 0.6888 (-0.0021)
Exchange Index 100.7 (-0.1)
Bank of England official close (Apr)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 share 3801.0 (-28.1)
FTSE 100 5855.3 (-40.7)
New York Dow Jones 9304.24 (-54.59)
Tokyo Nikkei Ave 13898.08 (-601.17)

Principal shows 23% profit rise

By DOMINIC WALSH

PRINCIPAL HOTELS will today unveil a 23 per cent jump in 1998 profits to £19.2 million — some £7.4 million higher than two years ago when it was forced to abandon a planned £150 million flotation.

Outstripping some of its publicly quoted rivals, Principal's 18 mainly four-star hotels lifted the crucial room yield by 15 per cent to £39.32, with occupancy slightly higher at 73.9 per cent and the average room rate up 15 per cent to £53.23.

Stripping out the effect of acquisitions and disposals, like-for-like sales were 9 per cent higher, with total turnover reaching £66.9 million. Capital expenditure increased from £8.5 million to £11 million. In

the first quarter of the current year, operating profits are running 22 per cent higher.

Tony Troy, managing director, hinted that a rumoured £60 million deal to acquire the Russell Hotel in London from Granada was now unlikely, but he added: "We are still actively looking at potential acquisitions in London."

He said that the group was also keen to boost its overseas presence. It has three properties in Amsterdam, Dublin and Copenhagen, and is targeting European cities including Berlin, Paris and Brussels.

He admitted that a flotation was "a possibility", but said that investors still wanted to grow the company.

Lloyds Direct Interest Rates for Personal Customers

Timesavings	Previous AER/gross rate %	New AER/gross rate %	New net rate %
£50,000+	6.00	5.50	4.40
£25,000+	5.85	5.35	4.28
£10,000+	5.75	5.25	4.20
£ 5,000+	5.50	5.00	4.00
£ 2,500+	5.00	4.50	3.60

This is a telephone based savings account and is not available through Lloyds Bank branches. Interest rates may vary from time to time. AER - Annual Equivalent Rate and is the national rate which illustrates the gross rate as if paid and compounded on an annual basis. As every advert for a savings product will contain an AER you will be able to compare more easily what return you can expect over time. GROSS - The annual interest rate before deduction of income tax at the rate specified by law (where applicable). NET - The annual interest rate after deduction of tax at the rate specified by law. This is shown for illustrative purposes only. Certain customers may be able to reclaim the tax from the Inland Revenue. Interest is normally paid at the net rate, unless the Account falls within an exempt category or the Account holder qualifies for receive interest gross.

These rates of interest apply with effect from 8 February 1999



Part of the Lloyds TSB Group

Lloyds Bank Plc, 71 Lombard Street, London EC3P 3BS

LineOne to challenge Net rivals

By GAVIN LUMSDEN

LINEONE, the Internet service provider backed by BT, United News & Media and News International, the owner of *The Times*, is stepping up the competition in the cut-throat online marketplace with one of the largest-ever newspaper promotions in the UK.

Up to six million readers of the *Daily Express*, *The Sun* and *The Sunday Times* will be given free compact discs in a marketing offensive due to start next month. The free CDs will contain software enabling the newspapers' readers to surf the Internet if they have a suitable computer.

The company has also decided to abandon its policy of charging a monthly subscription fee and offer Internet access free to the public instead. In future it will concentrate on raising advertising revenue.

The move is a direct response to the success of free Internet service providers such as Dions' Freeserve which alone has attracted 900,000 users since its launch last year.

Freeserve's progress has dwarfed LineOne, which in

the past two years has attracted just 100,000 subscribers who pay between £5 and £15 a month for the online service.

However, by "leveraging its media assets" LineOne clearly hopes it can rise to the crest of the Internet wave. The new medium is becoming increasingly popular and is now used by an estimated eight million people in the UK.

Last year, when it was still charging a fee for its service, LineOne generated 28,000 new subscribers when it distributed 1.5 million CDs to readers of *The Sunday Times*. This was deemed a huge success as the CDs cost just a few pence to produce.

A central part of LineOne's campaign will be that it offers free Internet access and free content, the latter being the ability to read the many publications of the two media groups behind the company.

Although LineOne will be free it will charge 50p a minute for people who ring up its helpline. This practice has come under the scrutiny of Ofcom, the telecoms regulator.

Sigrid Auferbeck assesses the man with the job of steering the German carmaker



Joachim Milberg consulted his wife before agreeing to the appointment

Academic in the hot seat at BMW

WHEN Joachim Milberg was asked to step into the breach as chief executive of BMW, he had little time to think. The rivalry between Bernd Pischetsrieder and Wolfgang Reitzle had just forced both to resign from the BMW management board. Yet Professor Milberg still took a moment to consult his wife.

This detail from Friday's turbulent seven-hour meeting displays one characteristic of Professor Milberg: he seeks consensus and does not make decisions against fierce opposition.

It was this that made him acceptable to the unions, who had rejected Herr Reitzle, the original favourite of the Quandt family that controls BMW.

But some are already worrying that this approach may be a severe weakness in tackling Rover, the solution to whose problems is likely to include heavy redundancies.

To make matters worse, BMW is itself poorly prepared for the cyclical slowdown of the industry. Its survival as an independent company was only questioned at the weekend by Robert Eaton, president of DaimlerChrysler. On the plus side, Professor Milberg's background qualifies him to tackle Rover's efficiency and quality problems. As head of engineering and production at BMW, he created one of the world's most productive and efficient plants in Regensburg, and organised production in BMW's US plant in Spartanburg, South Carolina.

Born in 1943, he began his career as a machine fitter before studying production technology. After heading Gilde-meister, a middle-sized tool manufacturer, for nine years, Professor Milberg returned to academia in 1981 to become professor for machine tools and operations research at Munich Technical University — the alma mater of many BMW managers, including Bernd Pischetsrieder, Wolfgang Reitzle and Professor Werner Sämman, who is head of Rover.

Professor Milberg joined the BMW board in 1993 as a head of production, and last year took responsibility for engineering.

The British unions, although relieved at Professor Milberg's appointment, know that the sword of Damocles has not been lifted. His priority is to end Rover's heavy losses. Bill Morris, general secretary of the TGWU, is seeking an urgent meeting with the new man.

Professor Milberg will need more than engineering skills and a courteous relationship with the unions if he is to prove himself as the strategist needed to head a leading carmaker.

In appointing him, the Quandt family has recognised its weakness in the face of opposition from the German unions. The family's spokesman reiterated the family's commitment to BMW over the weekend. But BMW now looks much more vulnerable to takeover.

Suitors set to bid for RAC arm

Lex Service, the motor group, and Cliven, the venture capital firm, are said to be drawing up bids of up to £400 million for the Royal Automobile Club's motoring services arm.

The news comes after Stephen Byers, the Trade Secretary, last week blocked the RAC's £450 million deal to sell the business to Candam, the US services group. After the DTI decision, the RAC said it would either go public or find another buyer willing to table a "knock-out" offer.

Offer for FKI failed

Jeff Whalley, retiring chairman of FKI, the engineering to materials handling group, mounted an unsuccessful attempt to take the firm private last year, it has emerged. Mr Whalley, who surprised the City two weeks ago by announcing he would step down in July, made a £1.1 billion bid for the group in October. FKI's non-executive directors rejected the proposal.

Threat to Lucas jobs

TRW, the US car components group, has admitted "some redundancies" are inevitable if its £4 billion offer for LucasVarley succeeds. TRW issued its offer document at the weekend. Federal-Mogul of the US is considering a counter bid for the group.

Axon chiefs get £660,000 bonus

By PAUL DURMAN

DIRECTORS of Axon Group, an information technology consultancy, paid themselves £660,000 in bonuses last year in the run-up to a planned £100 million flotation.

Mark Hunter, Axon's 36-year-old founder, and his colleagues will be among existing shareholders who hope to sell £15 million of shares in a placing next month. The firm, specialists in adapting SAP's business software, intends to raise another £15 million in new money.

The bonus payments depressed Axon's pre-tax profits in 1998 from the underlying level of £2.5 million. This was achieved on sales that doubled to £20 million.

Mr Hunter started Axon, based in Egham, Surrey, only four years ago. He used to work for SAP, whose software is used to integrate finance, sales and manufacturing information within large organisations. He currently has a stake of more than 30 per cent.

Axon is now focusing on helping its clients to exploit the Internet and the opportunities for e-commerce.

The company has appointed Barbara Thomas, deputy chairman of Friends Provident, as chairman.

WestLB Panmure will act as sponsor and broker to the placing, scheduled for next month. A pathfinder prospectus will be available shortly.

TT accuses Hall of over-optimism

By MATTHEW BARBOUR

TT GROUP, the engineering firm bidding £52 million for Hall Engineering, has accused its target of over-optimism in its profit forecast.

Hall Engineering rejected last month's 97p per share offer as "unsolicited and unwelcome". Hall shares have since risen to 120p, giving it a market value of £64 million, prompting speculation of further bids.

John Newman, TT's executive chairman, said: "It wasn't for our bid, the shares would still be at the 70p level. The market is always going to pre-empt counter-bids and we are prepared for that eventually."

Since February last year, analysts have halved their full-year profit forecasts for Hall

from about £20 million to £10 million. However, in its interim trading statement for the six months to June 30, Hall stated: "1998 is going to be a difficult year, although there are signs of a modest improvement in the second half."

Since the bid was made, PDFM has lifted its stake in TT from 5 per cent to 11 per cent via a 6 per cent holding bought from Hill Samuel Asset Management.

Hall's managing director, John Sward, said a sharp rise in the shares merely reflected "value" investors picking up shares. Hall is understood to be considering a management buyout as a means of fighting off the rival bid.

1998/99		Mid Cap (billions)	Price		Yield %	TM %	P/E	1998/99		Mid Cap (billions)	Price		Yield %	TM %	P/E
High	Low		High	Low				High	Low						
157	74	2.40	10	10	11	10	10	46	17	3.94	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
158	74	14.50	10	10	11	10	10	47	17	6.73	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
159	133	7.15	10	10	11	10	10	48	17	6.73	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
160	108	37.00	10	10	11	10	10	49	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
161	67	4.44	10	10	11	10	10	50	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
162	74	2.51	10	10	11	10	10	51	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
163	43	34.25	10	10	11	10	10	52	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
164	74	9.76	10	10	11	10	10	53	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
165	102	24	10	10	11	10	10	54	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
166	108	10.70	10	10	11	10	10	55	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
167	119	35.00	10	10	11	10	10	56	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
168	118	72	10	10	11	10	10	57	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
169	117	46.40	10	10	11	10	10	58	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
170	110	15.00	10	10	11	10	10	59	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
171	100	4.42	10	10	11	10	10	60	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
172	100	8.62	10	10	11	10	10	61	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
173	94	2.95	10	10	11	10	10	62	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
174	48	35.30	10	10	11	10	10	63	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
175	29	1.20	10	10	11	10	10	64	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
176	29	9.70	10	10	11	10	10	65	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
177	200	124	10	10	11	10	10	66	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
178	229	64	10	10	11	10	10	67	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
179	317	135	10	10	11	10	10	68	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
180	115	44	10	10	11	10	10	69	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
181	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	70	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
182	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	71	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
183	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	72	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
184	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	73	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
185	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	74	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
186	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	75	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
187	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	76	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
188	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	77	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
189	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	78	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
190	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	79	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
191	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	80	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
192	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	81	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
193	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	82	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
194	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	83	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
195	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	84	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
196	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	85	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
197	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	86	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
198	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	87	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
199	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	88	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
200	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	89	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
201	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	90	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
202	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	91	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
203	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	92	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
204	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	93	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
205	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	94	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
206	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	95	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
207	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	96	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
208	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	97	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
209	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	98	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
210	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	99	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
211	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	100	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
212	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	101	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
213	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	102	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
214	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	103	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
215	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	104	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
216	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	105	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
217	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	106	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
218	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	107	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
219	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	108	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
220	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	109	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
221	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	110	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
222	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	111	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
223	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	112	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
224	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	113	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
225	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	114	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
226	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	115	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
227	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	116	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
228	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	117	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
229	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	118	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
230	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	119	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
231	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	120	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
232	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	121	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
233	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	122	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
234	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	123	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
235	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	124	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
236	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	125	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
237	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	126	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
238	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	127	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
239	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	128	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
240	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	129	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
241	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	130	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
242	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	131	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
243	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	132	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
244	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	133	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
245	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	134	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
246	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	135	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
247	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	136	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
248	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	137	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
249	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	138	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
250	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	139	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
251	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	140	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
252	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	141	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
253	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	142	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
254	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	143	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
255	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	144	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
256	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	145	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
257	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	146	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
258	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	147	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
259	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	148	17	13.30	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
260	114	3.87	10	10	11	10	10	149	17	1.85	Amgen Inc	20	10	10	
261	114	3.87	10	10	1										

An arresting, not insulting, documentary

There was a small crop of new series beginning this weekend, of which three were variations on the theme of human interest documentary. They provided an illuminating contrast.

The award-winning criminologist and film-maker Roger Graef kicked off his three-part series *In Search of Law and Order* (Channel 4, Sunday) with *The Limits of Justice*, a study of the way the authorities in Boston, Massachusetts, have been tackling a vicious culture of drug-related teenage gang violence in the city's black Dorchester area.

Measured and unsensational, it was a model of responsible documentary-making and, as such, I suppose, deeply unfashionable. The only concession to hip gimmick was a short sequence in the opening showing some lads doing a rap about the cynicism and hatred in their lives. For the rest it

was compiled from longish, thoughtful contributions from a full spectrum of those involved in the problem, supported by a genuinely informative commentary from Graef himself.

If that sounds worthy but deadly dull, it wasn't. It was fascinating and, in a qualified way, inspiring. We are fooling ourselves if we think that we could not end up with equally desperate situations in this country. In some areas it is happening already. In extreme, individualistic, piecemeal America, public responses range from the Neanderthal to the vigorous, proactive and enlightened, light years ahead of anything over here.

They knew they had a problem in Boston when a gang disrupted a rival gang-member's funeral in a black community church, maniacally stabbing one of the mourners. The result has been a uniquely integrated, co-ordinated programme from all law enforce-

ment agencies, schools, churches, community groups and an impressive team of street-workers unafraid to get "down and dirty". The mixture of energetic but sensible enforcement and positive help for the teenagers has reaped huge dividends.

Despite being about criminals, this documentary did not try to grab our attention with scenes purporting to show illegal activity in progress. After the latest revelations about Channel 4's mocked-up scenes of male prostitution, it is reassuring not to have to wonder whether such footage is fake or not. It is even more refreshing not to have one's intelligence insulted for once.

I expected to have my intelligence insulted in Britain's Worst DIYers (TV, Friday). This is the first of a "Britain's Worst" series, at least one of which, I trust, will be "Britain's Worst Documentary-

REVIEW



Paul Hoggart

Makers". At least it wasn't called "DIYers From Hell", although that phrase cropped up at least once during the programme.

I have had periodic spasms of Doing-It-Myself throughout my life and have left a trail of not quite horizontal shelves to prove it. So I thought the show might offer the consolation of sympathetic identification, together with the pleasure of laughing at people

even less competent than myself.

In the event it was just sad, an endless litany of curiously stubborn bodgers with the aesthetic flair of a baboon's bottom. Many shared a predilection for cheap pine mouldings from Dado Rails & Us and bright orange wallpaper. All had a peculiar psychological compulsion not to finish anything. "You've got to keep a little bit for later on," explained John from Derby.

But their houses, their lives and their stories were simply turgid and at a full hour the programme dragged on as interminably as their redecoration projects. The commentary was read by Timothy Spall, and it is hard to imagine a more painful contrast to his recent triumph in *Shooting The Past*.

There was a bizarre sequence where they secretly filmed people removing items from a skip and then followed them home. This unearthed an extraordinary

collection of creative eccentricities, including a man who makes his own electric clothing which he powers from a wind generator in the garden. This material would have made a much more interesting programme in itself, and one might suspect they were using up footage from another documentary which had to be aborted for some reason.

Since the misis of TV time, the so-called "fly-on-the-doo-soap" has been accompanied by its wacky shadow, the cod fly-on-the-doo-soap. One recalls with a warm glow numerous sketches by Monty Python, Victoria Wood, Reeves and Mortimer, and of course classic films like the Comic Strip's *Spinal Tap*.

Now Hat Trick productions has come up with a splendid new variant — the spoof cod fly-on-the-doo-soap. At least I think that's what *Boyz Unlimited* (Channel 4,

Friday) is meant to be. At first I thought this account of an artificially manufactured "boy band" was a straight take-off, with one or two halfway decent gags, like the manager who had made his fortune in the Eighties illegally selling rare birds' eggs.

But gradually all the clichéd elements of this flagging genre popped up to be saluted. There's the commentary that begins each scene "It's (time of day) and (character) is getting worried", or "Meanwhile, tension is mounting for (character)". Or the actors who don't sound the least bit like real people. There are five more episodes to go, but I think they've made their point. Lazy television like this and "Britain's Worst" should be recognised as the anti-social nuisance it is. I suggest a combined effort by, say, the ITC, Trading Standards officials and the Breton Police to show these people the error of their ways.

BBC1

- 6.00am Business Breakfast (52576)
- 7.00am BBC Breakfast News (14731)
- 9.00am Killy (1813601)
- 9.45am The Vanessa Show (1455676)
- 10.05am News: Weather (1861404)
- 11.00am Real News (531717)
- 11.25am Can't Cook, Won't Cook (1601576)
- 11.55am News: Weather (1861404)
- 12.00pm Call My Bluff (52972)
- 12.30pm Wipeout (5215345)
- 12.55pm The Weather Show (148357427)
- 1.00pm One O'Clock News (157798)
- 1.30pm Regional News: Weather (47079695)
- 1.40pm Neighbours (12958750)
- 2.05pm Inside The Chief: Disguises himself as a lawyer-cum-artist marked for murder. With Raymond Burr (13005311)
- 2.55pm Body Spies (5359601)
- 3.25pm Children's BBC: Playdays (5272330)
- 3.45pm The Littlest Pat Shop (2168514)
- 3.55pm Bodger and Badger (2305255)
- 4.10pm Pocket Dragon: Adventures (4185555)
- 4.20pm Anthony Ant (5700205)
- 4.35pm News: Weather (1861404)
- 4.50pm News: Weather (1861404)
- 5.10pm Blue Peter (136205)
- 5.35pm Neighbours (12958750)
- 6.00pm Six O'Clock News: Weather (1663)
- 6.30pm Regional News Magazine (243)
- 7.00pm This Is Your Life (15040)
- 7.30pm Watchdog: Healthcheck: Misconceptions about brittle bone disease osteoporosis (1427)
- 8.00pm EastEnders: Nine's past catches up with her (1108)
- 8.30pm Dad Alan: is somewhat put out when his entire family claim he is a wimp — but he soon gets a chance to prove his courage. With George Cole (17345)
- 9.00pm Nine O'Clock News: Regional News: Weather (18359)

BBC2

- 7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: The Family Ness (3300750) 7.05am Telethon (5223392) 7.30am Secret Squirrel and Co (6014359) 7.55am Blue Peter (1718622) 8.20am Taz-Mania (7199040) 8.40pm Posh (2027720) 8.50pm Roundabout the Rounder (3174972) 9.00pm Space Ark (3336755) 9.10pm Short Circuit (4905885) 9.30pm Writing and Pictures (1080330) 9.45pm Storytime (1085885) 10.00pm Telethon (12137) 10.30pm Words and Pictures (2027720) 10.45pm Cats' Eyes (2070934) 11.00pm Look and Read (2617525) 11.20pm Zig Zag (5364311) 11.40pm Landmarks (4662137) 12.00pm History File (5639458) 12.30pm Working Lunch (257378) 1.00pm Roundabout the Rounder (3430717)
- 1.10pm The Travel Hour (15094779)
- 2.10pm Live Snooker: Benson and Hedges Masters: Six-time winner Stephen Hendry takes on Malta's Tony Drago in this afternoon's featured second-round match at the Wembley Conference Centre (41853040)
- 6.00pm The Simpsons: Bart finally oversteps the mark and the normally easy-going Homer applies a severe punishment (1883559)
- 6.20pm Five Go Mad in the Kitchen: Celebrities demonstrate recipes for Cornic Relief, starting with Jane Asher and Stephen Tompkinson (1587589)
- 6.25pm Hit, Miss or Maybe a (1141427)
- 6.40pm Live Snooker: Benson and Hedges Masters: Steve Davis begins his second-round match against former world champion Ken Doherty (4851205)
- 8.00pm **CHOICE**: Raising the Roof: Paul Kenyon investigates the truth behind shoddy workmanship from supposedly reputable firms (3/6) (12330)
- 8.30pm Food and Drink: Jeremy Lee prepares a tricolour of rabbit with prunes (18137)
- 9.00pm Red Dwarf: Holly is involved in a duel against the computer which replaced him after a series of disasters (1) (1) (9001)

HTV

- 5.30am ITN Morning News (58386)
- 6.00am GMTV (5010822)
- 9.25pm Trisha (15510427)
- 10.30pm This Morning (11617934)
- 12.15pm ITN News (1286663)
- 12.30pm ITN Lunchtime News (112224)
- 1.00pm Shortland Street (42666)
- 1.30pm Home and Away: Robert's malevolent nature becomes clear (111595)
- 2.00pm The Jerry Springer Show (1593886)
- 2.45pm Supermarket Sweep (1285921)
- 3.15pm ITN News Headlines (1305048)
- 3.30pm ITN News (1553141)
- 3.35pm CITV: Mopopolis: Spot (7705304) 3.35pm Kipper (320885) 3.45pm The Adventures of Captain Pugwash (3300021) 4.00pm Oggy and the Cockroaches (3499972) 4.20pm It's a Mystery (3475382) 4.45pm Sabrina the Teenage Witch (5068175)
- 5.10pm WEST: Gateway: Local celebrities report on their favourite holiday destinations in the region (1) (1) (9375855)
- 5.10pm WALES: Moneytrainers: A fine plate collection (1) (9375855)
- 5.40pm ITN Early Evening News (1439553)
- 6.00pm Home and Away (1) (764382)
- 6.25pm WALES: Wales Tonight (1) (541088)
- 6.25pm WEST: HTV Weather (52476)
- 6.30pm WEST: The West Tonight (1) (311)
- 6.55pm HTV Crime: Toppers (805408)
- 7.00pm Wish You Were Here: Denise Welch and Holly Newman visit Duna and Jamie Trevelyan travels to Nice (1) (7408)
- 7.30pm Coronation Street: Hayley decides to follow Roy (1) (585)
- 8.00pm Trauma Team: Martin McNally fights to save the life of a motorist who ploughed into a tree at 60mph (4/6) (1) (6156)
- 8.30pm Carol Vorderman's Better Homes: The team provide a Nottingham family with a shiny new kitchen (5/10) (1) (5853)

CENTRAL

- As HTV West except 12.20pm-12.30pm Central News: Weather (1865555) 1.00pm High Road (142668) 1.30pm The Jerry Springer Show (1789156) 2.15-2.45pm Home and Away (1287021) 3.20-3.25pm Central News (1553141) 5.10-5.40pm Shortland Street (9375855) 5.25-7.00pm Central News: Weather (1861058) 10.30-10.40pm Central News: Weather (1861058) 11.40-12.40pm The Wright Verdict (187717) 4.30pm Central Jobfinder '99 (1) (134441) 5.20-5.30pm Asian Eye (7594966)
- As HTV West except 12.15pm-12.27pm Westcountry News: Weather (1725555) 12.27-12.30pm Mammations (1865514) 1.00pm High Road (142668) 1.30pm The Jerry Springer Show (1789156) 2.15-2.45pm Home and Away (1287021) 3.20-3.25pm Westcountry News: Weather (1725555) 5.08pm Birthday People (5461021) 5.10-5.40pm Home and Away (1) (9375855) 5.50-7.00pm Westcountry News: Weather (1725555) 10.30-10.40pm Westcountry News: Weather (1725555) 11.40-12.40pm The Wright Verdict (187717)
- As HTV West except 12.15pm-12.30pm Meridian News: Weather (1725555) 5.10-5.40pm Meridian News: Weather (1725555) 5.50-7.00pm Meridian News: Weather (1725555) 10.30-10.40pm Meridian News: Weather (1725555) 11.40-12.40pm Meridian News: Weather (1725555)
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WESTCOUNTRY

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MERIDIAN

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ANGLIA

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CHOICE

- 9.30 **CHOICE**: Animal Police: New series following the fortunes of prospective RSPCA inspectors (1) (93232)
- 10.00pm Panorama: The race between scientists from Britain, America and the Far East to clone the first human baby (1) (549553)
- 10.45pm Snapshot: Helen Mirren in new series. The actress visits South Africa to see how women and children are affected by living in a sometimes violent and misogynistic society (1) (179553)
- 11.15pm Voices from Within (TVM 1994) A police psychiatrist investigates the case of a murder victim who has been positively identified as two different people. Thriller starring Corbin Bernsen. Directed by Eric Tiller (1) (18972)
- 12.40pm The Good Guys and the Bad Guys (1969) An ageing sheriff and a train robber meet up for one last showdown. Western adventure, starring Robert Mitchum and George Kennedy. Directed by Burt Kopp (1) (574553)
- 2.05pm Weather (274008)
- 2.10pm BBC News 24 (18891511)

CHOICE

- 9.30 **CHOICE**: The League of Gentlemen: Mike and Cheryl's wedding day arrives — but is it a mistake to let Geoff be best man? Harvey holds the funeral of his toast (1) (93214)
- 10.00 **CHOICE**: If I Ruled the World: New series of the political comedy quiz (1) (93214)
- 10.30pm Newsnight (1) (533798)
- 11.15pm Snooker: Benson and Hedges Masters: Best of today's action (77427)
- 11.50pm Newsnight (431059)
- 12.00pm Newsnight (431059)
- 12.30pm BBC Learning Zone: Open University: Building the Perfect Beast 1.30pm English: Whose English? 2.00pm Schools: Special Needs — Go For It! 4.00pm Languages: The French Exchange 5.50pm Business and Training: Skills for Work 6.00pm Hopping 5.45pm Open University: The York Mystery Plays 6.10pm Wendeponies 6.35pm Plus Ce Change

CHOICE

- 9.00 The Vice Dougie makes an error of judgment by telling Scott that Emma that her agency is under investigation, putting Cheryl in danger (8/6) (1) (1311)
- 10.00pm News at Ten: Weather (1) (5808)
- 10.30pm HTV News and Weather (1) (63175)
- 10.40pm Nash Bridges: Nash teams up with a sexy Chicago cop to track down a vicious murderer (1) (549553)
- 11.40pm Midnight Caller: Jack stumbles upon a sinister black market (787717)
- 12.40pm Football: Extra Football League highlights (2181248)
- 1.40pm Football (1) (4540070)
- 2.10pm The Fall of the House of Usher (1960) Period thriller about a man who returns to his fiancée's ancestral estate to investigate her death and discovers that she's been buried alive. Vincent Price stars. Directed by Roger Corman (4744165)
- 3.35pm Trisha: Show earlier (1) (1862254)
- 4.35pm Soundtrack (836473)
- 4.50pm ITN Nightscreen (88016712)
- 5.00pm Coronation Street (1) (47373)

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For further listings see Saturday's Vision

SKY ONE

- 7.00pm Court Ductals (9899) 7.30pm The One That Got Away (14040) 8.30pm Hollywood Squares (30156) 9.00pm Sally Jessy Raphael (10010) 10.00pm The Oprah Winfrey Show (10010) 11.00pm Quil (18234) 12.00pm Jenny Jones (15553) 1.00pm Mad About You (10010) 1.30pm The Bill (10010) 2.00pm The Bill (10010) 2.30pm The Bill (10010) 3.00pm The Bill (10010) 3.30pm The Bill (10010) 4.00pm The Bill (10010) 4.30pm The Bill (10010) 5.00pm The Bill (10010) 5.30pm The Bill (10010) 6.00pm The Bill (10010) 6.30pm The Bill (10010) 7.00pm The Bill (10010) 7.30pm The Bill (10010) 8.00pm The Bill (10010) 8.30pm The Bill (10010) 9.00pm The Bill (10010) 9.30pm The Bill (10010) 10.00pm The Bill (10010) 10.30pm The Bill (10010) 11.00pm The Bill (10010) 11.30pm The Bill (10010) 12.00pm The Bill (10010) 12.30pm The Bill (10010) 1.00pm The Bill (10010) 1.30pm The Bill (10010) 2.00pm The Bill (10010) 2.30pm The Bill (10010) 3.00pm The Bill (10010) 3.30pm The Bill (10010) 4.00pm The Bill (10010) 4.30pm The Bill (10010) 5.00pm The Bill (10010) 5.30pm The Bill (10010) 6.00pm The Bill (10010) 6.30pm The Bill (10010) 7.00pm The Bill (10010) 7.30pm The Bill (10010) 8.00pm The Bill (10010) 8.30pm The Bill (10010) 9.00pm The Bill (10010) 9.30pm The Bill (10010) 10.00pm The Bill (10010) 10.30pm The Bill (10010) 11.00pm The Bill (10010) 11.30pm The Bill (10010) 12.00pm The Bill (10010) 12.30pm The Bill (10010) 1.00pm The Bill (10010) 1.30pm The Bill (10010) 2.00pm The Bill (10010) 2.30pm The Bill (10010) 3.00pm The Bill (10010) 3.30pm The Bill (10010) 4.00pm The Bill (10010) 4.30pm The Bill (10010) 5.00pm The Bill (10010) 5.30pm The Bill (10010) 6.00pm The Bill (10010) 6.30pm The Bill (10010) 7.00pm The Bill (10010) 7.30pm The Bill (10010) 8.00pm The Bill (10010) 8.30pm The Bill (10010) 9.00pm The Bill (10010) 9.30pm The Bill (10010) 10.00pm The Bill (10010) 10.30pm The Bill (10010) 11.00pm The Bill (10010) 11.30pm The Bill (10010) 12.00pm The Bill (10010) 12.30pm The Bill (10010) 1.00pm The Bill (10010) 1.30pm The Bill (10010) 2.00pm The Bill (10010) 2.30pm The Bill (10010) 3.00pm The Bill (10010) 3.30pm The Bill (10010) 4.00pm The Bill (10010) 4.30pm The Bill (10010) 5.00pm The Bill (10010) 5.30pm The Bill (10010) 6.00pm The Bill (10010) 6.30pm The Bill (10010) 7.00pm The Bill (10010) 7.30pm The Bill (10010) 8.00pm The Bill (10010) 8.30pm The Bill (10010) 9.00pm The Bill (10010) 9.30pm The Bill (10010) 10.00pm The Bill (10010) 10.30pm The Bill (10010) 11.00pm The Bill (10010) 11.30pm The Bill (10010) 12.00pm The Bill (10010) 12.30pm The Bill (10010) 1.00pm The Bill (10010) 1.30pm The Bill (10010) 2.00pm The Bill (10010) 2.30pm The Bill (10010) 3.00pm The Bill (10010) 3.30pm The Bill (10010) 4.00pm The Bill (10010) 4.30pm The Bill (10010) 5.00pm The Bill (10010) 5.30pm The Bill (10010) 6.00pm The Bill (10010) 6.30pm The Bill (10010) 7.00pm The Bill (10010) 7.30pm The Bill (10010) 8.00pm The Bill (10010) 8.30pm The Bill (10010) 9.00pm The Bill (10010) 9.30pm The Bill (10010) 10.00pm The Bill (10010) 10.30pm The Bill (10010) 11.00pm The Bill (10010) 11.30pm The Bill (10010) 12.00pm The Bill (10010) 12.30pm The Bill (10010) 1.00pm The Bill (10010) 1.30pm The Bill (10010) 2.00pm The Bill (10010) 2.30pm The Bill (10010) 3.00pm The Bill (10010) 3.30pm The Bill (10010) 4.00pm The Bill (10010) 4.30pm The Bill (10010) 5.00pm The Bill (10010) 5.30pm The Bill (10010) 6.00pm The Bill (10010) 6.30pm The Bill (10010) 7.00pm The Bill (10010) 7.30pm The Bill (10010) 8.00pm The Bill (10010) 8.30pm The Bill (10010) 9.00pm The Bill (10010) 9.30pm The Bill (10010) 10.00pm The Bill (10010) 10.30pm The Bill (10010) 11.00pm The Bill (10010) 11.30pm The Bill (10010) 12.00pm The Bill (10010) 12.30pm The Bill (10010) 1.00pm The Bill (10010) 1.30pm The Bill (10010) 2.00pm The Bill (10010) 2.30pm The Bill (10010) 3.00pm The Bill (10010) 3.30pm The Bill (10010) 4.00pm The Bill (10010) 4.30pm The Bill (10010) 5.00pm The Bill (10010) 5.30pm The Bill (10010) 6.00pm The Bill (10010) 6.30pm The Bill (10010) 7.00pm The Bill (10010) 7.30pm The Bill (10010) 8.00pm The Bill (10010) 8.30pm The Bill (10010) 9.00pm The Bill (10010) 9.30pm The Bill (10010) 10.00pm The Bill (10010) 10.30pm The Bill (10010) 11.00pm The Bill (10010) 11.30pm The Bill (10010) 12.00pm The Bill (10010) 12.30pm The Bill (10010) 1.00pm The Bill (10010) 1.30pm The Bill (10010) 2.00pm The Bill (10010) 2.30pm The Bill (10010) 3.00pm The Bill (10010) 3.30pm The Bill (10010) 4.00pm The Bill (10010) 4.30pm The Bill (10010) 5.00pm The Bill (1



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Orange aims
for brighter
future

BUSINESS

RATES 46
Roger Bootle
on impact of
the squeeze



BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

MONDAY FEBRUARY 8 1999

DTI outlines fears for 800 small firms

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

UP TO 800 small companies may soon be forced from the equity markets because they are being starved of investment, according to a Department of Trade and Industry report published today. The combined value of the companies would equal BP-Amoco, the oil company.

The exit of the businesses from the stock market would have serious implications for an important section of the economy and for the attempts by the Government to improve Britain's competitiveness.

The warning that two fifths of the country's quoted companies could be pushed out of the mar-

kets, and thus excluded from a vital means of raising cash, comes in a report published today by the Department of Trade and Industry. The study into how smaller companies do business with the City says that global and domestic odds are stacking up against investment in them. Its findings come only weeks after the Government held up the small company and entrepreneur as crucial to fueling the economy in its Competitiveness White Paper.

The report, written by a cross-section of industry and investors, says that smaller companies are being squeezed by the increasing consolidation of

investment funds and the growing globalisation of equity markets. Both factors are reducing investment diversity and marginalising the small player. A further blow is dealt by the mounting trend for investment funds to index their resources — concentrating on tracking the FTSE 100, 200 and 350. Added to this is a fundamental failing by smaller companies to communicate effectively.

In a joint foreword to the report Stephen Byers, the Trade and Industry Secretary, and Kenneth Clarke, MP, who heads the small quoted companies association Cisco, say "it is vital that they can obtain supportive finance from institutional investors to facilitate their further development".

The Stock Exchange is sending the report to all listed companies outside the FTSE 350 to alert them to the danger.

Paul Myners, the main author of the report, said: "The lack of investment interest in small companies has important implications for small companies and also government policy because it threatens competitiveness."

Katie Morris, chief executive of Cisco, said: "Smaller quoted companies are under extreme pressure and it is imperative that fund managers take a less negative and more realistic approach to valuation and to risk perception."

A fall in investment interest in smaller businesses is likely to trigger dangerous knock-on effects, the report says. Venture capitalists will be less keen to pump money into new businesses — and they are already reluctant to back start-ups — because they will not be able to exit their stakes if the companies' shares are poorly traded.

The report says that companies and fund managers must improve communication. It found that both businesses and investors had a poor understanding of each other's priorities and requirements.

Weak lifeblood, page 46



Bill Landels, left, and Dr Bill Pardoe reflect on a multimillion-pound energy deal between Scottish Power and Pilkington

Float plan for Scottish Telecom

BY PAUL DURMAN

SCOTTISH POWER, whose ManWeb subsidiary, headed by Bill Landels, managing director, is supplying a new efficient energy system to Pilkington's glassmaking operation in St Helens, is reported to be considering a £2 billion flotation for its telecommunications business.

Scottish Telecom, which is owned by Scottish Power, paid £66 million last year for Demon Internet, one of the UK's leading Internet access providers. It also offers business and residential services.

It is claimed a new 20-year agreement will save the glassmaker whose European manufacturing director is Bill Pardoe, £1 million a year.

UK bank profits decline in face of competition

BY CAROLINE MERRELL

UK BANKS are expected to show flat or falling profits this year because of heightened competition in the mortgage market and the fallout from the crisis in emerging markets.

The mortgage banks — Alliance & Leicester, Woolwich and Halifax — had failed to diversify from their core businesses of lending and savings, said analysts. Their ability to lend money had been hampered by fierce competition from the mutual societies.

Margins at all the banks have been squeezed by the cuts in base rates, as the banks cannot afford to cut their savings by too much.

New mortgage lenders,

such as Standard Life, are poised to take an even bigger share of the mortgage market next year. The share prices of mortgage banks had fallen or remained static over the past 12 months, despite the big rise in the All-Share index.

Lloyds TSB, the first bank to report its results, is expected on Friday to announce pre-tax profits in the region of £2.9 billion to £3.2 billion. The top end of the profit prediction is only slightly higher than last year's figure of £3.16 billion. Its profits for 1997-1998 were 25 per cent higher than the previous year.

Barclays, on the other hand, is expected to reveal substantial losses on emerging mar-

kets through its Barclays Capital subsidiary. Analysts said last week they were reassured by the management's assertions that profits would not fall below £1.9 billion.

The results from NatWest are expected to be better than Barclays, reflecting the fact that NatWest dealt with its problems in investment banking before Barclays. Profits at NatWest are expected to be about £1.9 billion, up from £1.4 billion last year.

HSBC and Standard Chartered are expected to be most affected by the crisis in the Far East. Profits at HSBC are expected to fall to £4.2 billion from £4.9 billion last year.

Bug imperils floats and buyouts

BY JASON NISSE

THE Department of Trade and Industry, the British Venture Capital Association and the Accounting Standards Board have been meeting leading accountants and private capital firms to try to avert crisis in the £13 billion venture capital market later this year.

Accountants say that they will not be able to authorise leveraged buyouts because of worries about the millennium computer bug. The problem has already nearly blocked one big deal, and leading venture capitalists say the market could collapse.

The problem is also expected to prevent many companies floating on the stock market because accountants will not be able to agree working capital statements because of bug-related uncertainties.

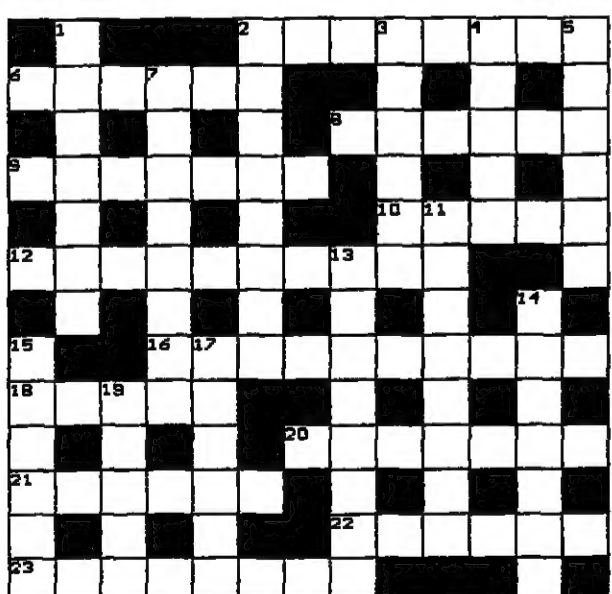
Venture capital deals could collapse because accountants will not sign Financial Assistance certificates, which allow shares in a company to be bought with leveraged finance. The certificates say that a company can meet all its financial obligations over the next 12 months.

However, almost all companies are unable to forecast the financial impact of the Year 2000 bug on their business. Accounting firms are refusing to sign the certificates because if bug-related problems put buyouts into financial difficulties within 12 months, the accountants can be sued by investors and banks. "The problem is that Financial Assistance certificates cannot be qualified," said John Cole, a partner in Ernst & Young.

Accountants have already held meetings with the DTI and the BVCA to try to resolve the problem. The Accounting Standards Board is this week due to issue guidance on what procedures accountants need to adopt that might allow them to sign the certificates.

This will call for directors of a buyout to issue a detailed statement on how well prepared they and their suppliers and customers are for 2000. If accountants can satisfy themselves that this is "reasonable", the ASB will say, certificates can be issued.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1635

ACROSS

- 2 Easy conquest (4-4)
- 6 Indigent person (6)
- 8 Apprehend directly (6)
- 9 Corridor (7)
- 10 One playing a part (5)
- 12 Uncomplimentary (10)
- 16 A let-down (10)
- 18 Serving spoon (5)
- 20 Fine-weather timepiece (7)
- 21 Desperately sad (6)
- 22 Homily (6)
- 23 Awful place (4-4)

DOWN

- 1 Hubbub; boring fuss (7)
- 2 Expecting (8)
- 3 Aeroplane garage (6)
- 4 Boast (arch.) (5)
- 5 Hold back, slow down (6)
- 7 Rural (poetry) (8)
- 11 Part of car; math. solid (8)
- 13 Naturally (2,6)
- 14 One exhibiting all virtues (7)
- 15 Part of car; some eggs (6)
- 17 Fairly recent (6)
- 19 Slow style of speech (5)

SOLUTION TO NO 1634

- ACROSS: 1 Grand 4 Schemer 8 Ravishing 9 Rap 10 Ear 11 Sepulture 12 Piece 13 Niche 16 Nuremberg 18 Bud 20 Cwm 21 Vade-mecum 22 Austere 23 Stern
- DOWN: 1 Gorse 2 Adverse 3 Disaster movie 4 Skimpy 5 Highland Games 6 March 7 Replete 12 Panacea 14 Cubicle 15 Beadle 17 Remus 19 Demos

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City duo extend research lead

BY MARTIN WALLER

THE dominance of the two big names in City research and analysis continues to grow, according to a poll of the country's top companies, with Merrill Lynch and Warburg Dillon Read pulling away further from the rest of the pack.

The two were voted in first and second place, respectively, in a league of top securities houses for research, the same places achieved in last year's poll. In addition, Warburg held on to the number one slot for corporate finance advice.

The gap between the two on research has narrowed, according to the survey in *Securities and Investment Review*, the magazine of the Securities Institute, which is published today. However, their scores have drawn ahead

of the other big City players. Credit Suisse First Boston, merged since last year with BZW Securities, comes in third, but with a score that is only half that of the two big players.

Clive Brand, client services director of Consensus Research, the firm that conducted the poll, said: "It will take a major investment of time, effort and resource for any of the other players to become a genuine challenger to the Big Two."

The survey also showed that although companies thought that analysts generally had a good knowledge of their financial track record and strategy, their future prospects and sales and marketing efforts were much less well understood.

Midshires spurns call for meeting

BY SUSAN EMMETT

BIRMINGHAM Midshires Building Society has provoked a dispute with some of its members by dismissing calls for another general meeting as "frivolous" and "vexatious".

The society, which is shortly to be become part of Halifax, said the takeover had been approved by 95 per cent of members last December and that a further meeting would be a waste of time and money.

But Bob Goodall, who is campaigning against the conversion of mutuals, feels slighted. He said: "I believe that this interpretation is entirely bogus and a device by the board to stop a second [meeting] that would have allowed members an opportunity to protect mortgage customers, protect savers and protect jobs."

EMI tunes into Net

BY RAYMOND SNOODY
MEDIA EDITOR

FIVE of the world's largest record companies will today announce in New York that they are to begin a trial to allow full-length CDs to be downloaded over the Internet.

The initiative by BMG, EMI, whose artists range from Sir Cliff Richard to the Artist Formerly Known As Prince, Sony Music, Universal Music and Warner Music indicates how seriously the companies take the Internet threat.

Music is already being downloaded on the Internet in breach of copyright. Some artists have already started by-passing the record companies entirely and using the Internet to sell directly to the public. David Bowie was



Prince EMI artist

among the first to experiment with the medium. The market trial, on a cable system in San Diego, is expected to begin in the spring and last for most of this year. The

record companies are working with IBM to test various ways of delivering music commercially on the Internet. The main thrust of the trial will involve using the broadband cable network but it is believed the use of conventional telephone lines will also be assessed. Hundreds of CD albums and new singles will be available for purchase by credit card through an online store.

An important aspect of the test will be to ensure that the transactions are secure. The record companies want to ensure that consumers can buy music over the Internet without infringing intellectual property rights. Under the trial San Diego cable subscribers will be able to download music directly into their PCs.

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